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THE RISE OF GENTILE CHRISTIANITY

F. J. FOAKES-JACKSON

By F. J. FOAKES-JACKSON

The Rise of Gentile Christianity

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THE RISE OF GENTILE CHRISTIANITY

BY

F. J. FOAKES-JACKSON
FELLOW OF JESUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, AND BRIGGS' GRADUATE PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS IN UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, AND LECTURER IN THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK CITY

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THE RISE OF GENTILE CHRISTIANITY
— B —
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TO
CLAUDE G. MONTEFIORE

PREFACE

The ministry of Jesus Christ was almost entirely directed to Israel, and His followers were at first organised as a purely Jewish community. The first Gentiles were admitted on sufferance, and not without opposition. This is the testimony of the New Testament, a collection of books, all, with one possible exception, written by Jews. By the close of the first century the Christian religion appears to be professed by more Gentiles than Jews; by the middle of the second century the Jewish Christians have become no more than a sect, and the breach between Judaism and Christianity is complete. An attempt to indicate how this came about may not be out of place.

This little book is the outcome of lectures delivered not only to Christian audiences, as to that of the Alumni of Union Theological Seminary, New York, and to the Clergy of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany, N. Y., but also in part to the Jewish Menorah Association,

and almost in their entirety to the Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. The author hopes that his work may be of interest, not only from the importance of the subject, but as an attempt to present the story of early Christianity uncontroversially to highly educated Jews.

A grateful acknowledgment is due to Professor F. Gavin of the General Theological Seminary, New York, for his care in finally revising the proofs.

CONTENTS

Chapter I

PREACHING AND BAPTISM OF JOHN

PAGE

HISTORICAL MATERIAL FOR FIRST CENTURY JUDAISM SCANTY—JEWISH GREEK LITERATURE PRESERVED BY CHRISTIANS—ABSORBING INTEREST IN THE LAW—THE DESIRE TO OBSERVE THE LAW NOT UNSPIRITUAL—THE ZADOKITE DOCUMENT—REASONS FOR JEWISH DISCONTENT IN PALESTINE—ASCETIC ELEMENT IN LEGALISM—SYMPTOMS OF JEWISH UNREST IN PALESTINE—LEGALISM AND ITS EFFECT ON PROPHECY—APPEARANCE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST—LUCAN NARRATIVE OF HIS BIRTH—THE NARRATIVE IS THOROUGHLY JUDAIC—THE PREACHING OF JOHN—IMPRISONMENT OF JOHN—ACCOUNT OF THE BAPTIST IN JOSEPHUS—DEATH OF JOHN CAUSE OF DESTRUCTION OF HEROD'S ARMY—JOHN EVIDENTLY AN IMPORTANT PERSON—INCIDENTS OF THE MINISTRY OF JESUS CONNECTED WITH JOHN—DID JESUS AND JOHN WORK IN CONSCIOUS HARMONY?—IMPORTANCE OF JOHN IN ACTS—STRESS LAID ON BAPTISM—JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN BAPTISM—JOSEPHUS' VIEW OF BAPTISM—SACRAMENTAL IDEA OF BAPTISM—WHY PAUL DOES NOT ALLUDE TO JOHN—JOHN AND JESUS MAY HAVE MADE INDEPENDENT APPEALS TO THE NATIONAL CONSCIENCE—SUBJECT OF THE NEXT CHAPTER . . 15

Chapter II

JESUS AS A JEWISH TEACHER

JESUS TAUGHT IN A JEWISH ATMOSPHERE—THE AUDIENCES OF JESUS WERE PREPARED FOR THIS MESSAGE

PAGE

TO JEWS—IN A SENSE JESUS' MORAL TEACHING WAS NOT NEW—NO NEW DOCTRINE OF GOD—WHAT DO WE KNOW OF JESUS?—NO FIRST-HAND EVIDENCE—HOW THE QUESTION MUST BE EXAMINED—JESUS REGARDED AS A MIRACULOUS PERSONALITY—THE HUMANITY OF THE CHARACTER PORTRAYED IN THE FIRST GOSPELS—TEACHING OF JESUS AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT—JESUS AND THE LAW—"INTERIM ETHIK"—THE ENEMIES OF JESUS: (a) PRIESTS AT JERUSALEM, (b) THE PHARISEES—PHARISAISM—WHY DID JESUS DENOUNCE THE PHARISEES?—THE SABBATH—FASTING—CASUISTRY—MIRACLES OF JESUS—ESCHATOLOGY—JESUS AND THE OFFICIAL TEACHERS OF HIS DAY 38

CHAPTER III

GOSPEL SPREADS TO THE GENTILES

THE GOSPELS AT FIRST READ BY JEWS—THE DEATH OF JESUS—ACTS I-V IS A CONSISTENT NARRATIVE—FIRST PREACHING ABOUT JESUS—PETER'S SPEECH ON THE DESCENT OF THE SPIRIT—ON THE HEALING OF THE LAME MAN—BELIEVERS IN JESUS FAVOURED BY THE PEOPLE—THE HELLENISTS: STEPHEN STONED—PERSECUTION BY HEROD AGRIPPA I—JAMES, THE LORD'S BROTHER—THE JEWS OF THE DISPERSION—SIX CLASSES OF CONVERTS IN ACTS: (1) THE HEBREWS, (2) THE GRECIANS, (3) PROSELYTES, (4) SAMARITANS, (5) GODLY GENTILES, (6) GENTILES GENERALLY—LOYALTY OF FIRST BELIEVERS PREVENTS APPROACH TO GENTILES—MOTIVE FOR OBSERVING THE LAW—REASONS FOR GOING TO THE GENTILES—OBJECT OF THE AUTHOR OF ACTS—ASSEMBLY AT JERUSALEM—JAMES' DECISION—PARTIES IN THE CHURCH—GENTILES ADMITTED WITHOUT BEING CIRCUMCISED—SURVEY OF THE SUBJECT THUS FAR 60

PAGE

CHAPTER IV

PAUL AS A JEWISH TEACHER

PAUL AN ENIGMA TO EVERY AGE—PAUL LESS AN INNOVATOR THAN IS GENERALLY SUPPOSED—TWO PICTURES OF PAUL—HIS BIRTH AND EDUCATION—PAUL'S INNER EXPERIENCES—NEED OF A JEWISH STUDY OF PAUL—PAUL'S CHARACTER LITTLE CHANGED BY HIS CONVERSION—CHRYSOSTOM'S PRAISE OF PAUL—PAUL AND THE "REJECTION" OF ISRAEL—POLITICAL DANGERS IN THE TIME OF PAUL—PAUL AS (a) A VISIONARY, (b) A PRACTICAL MAN—SANITY OF HIS JUDGMENT—POLITENESS OF PAUL—PRESENCE OF MIND—STRATEGIC SKILL AS A MISSIONARY—PAUL'S ATTITUDE TO THE GENTILES—WHY PAUL REFUSED TO MAKE GENTILES KEEP THE RITUAL LAWS—PAUL AS A MORALIST—MARCION'S VIEW OF PAUL—PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF JESUS—DID PAUL TEACH THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST?—BELIEF IN THE GOD OF ISRAEL PRACTICAL, NOT THEOLOGICAL—PAUL'S BELIEF IN JESUS THE SAME—PAUL AND THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS—PAUL'S THEOLOGY AFFECTED A LATER AGE THAN HIS OWN 84

CHAPTER V

JOSEPHUS AND PAUL COMPARED

PAUL AND JOSEPHUS CONTRASTED—YET THERE IS A SIMILARITY—WRITINGS OF JOSEPHUS PRESERVED BY CHRISTIANS—CAREER OF JOSEPHUS—JOSEPHUS' STORY IN THE "LIFE" AND THE "WARS" COMPARED—JOSEPHUS PATRONISED BY VESPASIAN—WRITES THE "ANTIQUITIES"—WRITES HIS "LIFE"—ANSWERS APION—IGNORANCE ABOUT THE JEWS IN ANCIENT TIMES—JOSEPHUS' SERVICES TO THE NATION—THE ROMAN EMPIRE—ROMAN RULE NOT MILITARY—ROME AND BRITAIN COMPARED—JEWS REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE EMPIRE—THE HERODIAN POLICY—JOSEPHUS ADVOCATES LOYALTY TO ROME 109

PAGE

CHAPTER VI

JAMES—PETER—JOHN

THE TWELVE APOSTLES—PETER, JAMES AND JOHN—THE FIRST FOLLOWERS OF JESUS—THE DEATH OF JAMES—HEGESIPPUS ON THE DEATH OF JAMES—THE KINSMEN OF JESUS—JAMES FAMED AS ASCETIC—EPISTLE OF JAMES—(a) PURE RELIGION, (b) ACT AS WELL AS BELIEVE—THE POWER OF PRAYER—RESEMBLANCES TO TEACHING OF JESUS—PETER—MONOPOLISES THE STAGE IN THE EARLY STORY OF THE CHURCH—PETER IN THE PAULINE EPISTLES—PETER IN ROME—FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER—PETER IN LEGEND—JOHN, WHO WAS HE?—HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS JUDAISM—DOGMATIC RATHER THAN LEGAL COMPARED WITH THE EARLIER GOSPELS—JOHN COMPARED WITH MARK AS TO THE SABBATH—JESUS AND THE PHARISEES IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS—JESUS AND "THE JEWS WHO BELIEVED ON HIM" IN JOHN—DOGMATIC REASONS NOW PART JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY 134

CHAPTER VII

EARLY DISPUTES BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS—ANALYSIS OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS—CHRIST AND THE ANGELS—THE DOCTRINE OF THE MESSIAH—JESUS THE SON, THE MESSIAH, AND THE TRUE PRIEST—GOD MANIFESTED BY HIS WISDOM OR WORD—THE WRITER'S THEORY OF THE LAW—THE HEBREW HEROES—ANONYMITY OF THE LETTER—EPISTLE OF BARNABAS—LAW NEVER SHOULD HAVE BEEN UNDERSTOOD LITERALLY—MARKS A STAGE IN THE CONTROVERSY—THE TWO WAYS AND THE TEACHING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES—POLEMIC ON FASTING—LETTERS OF IGNATIUS—ANTI-JUDAISM . 158

CHAPTER VIII

THE REVOLT OF BARCOCHBA AND THE MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP

POPULAR VIEW OF THE WAR OF BARCOCHBA—THREE QUESTIONS—WHAT DO WE KNOW OF THE WARS UNDER

PAGE

TRAJAN AND HADRIAN?—EUSEBIUS—DION CASSIUS—SPARTIANUS—ACCOUNT MEAGRE AND INCREDIBLE—AKIBA'S PART IN THE JEWISH WAR—WAR UNDER TRAJAN—WAR UNDER HADRIAN—DID BARCOCHBA PERSECUTE THE CHRISTIANS?—DID THE JEWS PERSECUTE THE GENTILE CHRISTIANS?—THE MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP AT SMYRNA—PARALLELS WITH THE STORY OF THE CRUCIFIXION—THE PART SAID TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY THE JEWS—THE STORY NOT ENTIRELY FICTITIOUS—JEWS DO NOT FIGURE IN EARLY MARTYROLOGIES—WAS THERE REALLY A FORMAL SEPARATION BETWEEN JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY? 178

Chapter IX

THE CHURCH FATHERS AND JUDAISM

Justin Martyr—Tertullian—Origen

JUSTIN IS SALUTED BY TRYPHO—HOW JUSTIN BECAME A CHRISTIAN—TRYPHO ADVISES JUSTIN TO BECOME A JEW—GOSPEL PRECEPTS WONDERFUL BUT IMPOSSIBLE—CHRISTIANS WHO OBSERVE THE LAW—THE MESSIAH NOT TO BE A DIVINE BEING—CHRISTIANS ACCUSED OF HAVING TWO GODS—JUSTIN AND TRYPHO DEPART IN AMITY—IS THE MESSIAH HUMAN OR DIVINE?—CONFESSION OF THE MESSIAHSHIP OF JESUS INVOLVES THAT OF HIS DIVINITY—TERTULLIAN—"ADVERSUS JUDAEOS"—THE VIRGIN BIRTH—JEWS ACCUSED OF TAMPERING WITH SCRIPTURE—JEWISH TRANSLATIONS INTO GREEK—ORIGEN'S HEXAPLA—CHURCH DOCTRINE BECOMES STEREOTYPED—JUDAISM REJECTS THE USE OF GREEK—HEBREW NOT STUDIED BY CHRISTIANS—JEWS STRESS OBEDIENCE TO LAW—CHRISTIANS STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF RIGHT BELIEF—BOTH ACCEPT AN INFALLIBLE GUIDE—THE PRESENT DIFFICULTY COMMON TO JEWS AND CHRISTIANS 203

THE RISE OF GENTILE CHRISTIANITY

THE RISE OF GENTILE CHRISTIANITY

Chapter I

THE PREACHING AND BAPTISM OF JOHN

To understand the circumstances amid which the Christian religion arose one must transport himself into the midst of the Jewish world of Palestine between the years 20 and 30 of the Christian era. And having done this, it must be remembered that the material out of which a picture of the time can be constructed is scanty. We have no contemporary evidence. It is truly extraordinary to realise that but for Josephus, who wrote between A.D. 80-100, and the Christian Gospels, some of which may be earlier, we should know almost nothing about the Jews of that age. The Mishna is much later and the historical information it supplies would

not be intelligible but for Josephus. To show how much in the dark we are as to Jewish history, all have heard of the terrible wars under Trajan and Hadrian (98-135); from hints we have received the slaughter was enormous, and the very existence of the Roman Empire was at stake. Yet we know scarcely anything of what happened during this crisis, and, without Josephus, we should not have any record of Jewish history from B.C. 130 to A.D. 70. Herod and his family would be but names; how Titus took Jerusalem would be a matter of conjecture. It is a remarkable fact that the Jews have preserved none of their literature during a most interesting period of their history. The story of the Maccabees has survived in the Greek Bible preserved by the Christian Church, as did that intensely Jewish book the "Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach," which appears in the Apocrypha as Ecclesiasticus, the so-called "Wisdom of Solomon," and much besides. Except Daniel, the so-called Apocalyptic literature has had to be recovered in various languages, but not in Hebrew. Josephus would have been unknown, as would Philo, but for Chris-

tian scribes. Such variants of Judaism as Essenism, and the community life of the Therapeutæ, would have been practically unknown; and except for a few obscure hints, we should be left virtually in the dark about these movements.

It is difficult to account for this and here but one solution can be offered. The interest in the Law absorbed all others. In the Law the Jew believed he had the declared and final Will of God. It was a storehouse, infallible and inexhaustible, from which he derived all truth. Every new interpreter drew from it a deeper and fuller meaning, and it appeared to its students to take almost the place of God, as being the revelation of all He requires of man. This is not always obvious, and it should be emphasised here for this reason. An immense amount of investigation has been profitably bestowed on the Apocalyptic literature; but, whilst one gratefully acknowledges its value, its importance may have been exaggerated. Apocalyptic visions, eschatology, and even the coming of some Messianic person or deliverer, inevitably occupied the minds of men deeply moved in days

of intense religious excitement; but the Jewish teachers in authority certainly laid most stress on the Law.

Here it may not be out of place to utter a protest against the popular prejudice which sees in all legalism a lack of spirituality. If a man accepts, though few do now, the doctrine of the Law being the literal revelation of God's will, the logical result is a desire to obey its precepts in every particular; for nothing is trivial if it is commanded by Him. In this spirit, obedience to the Law is not a mechanical discharge of unimportant rites, but proceeds from a sincere desire to serve the God who enjoined them. And what is more, the Law was accepted with the firm conviction that if it were but literally obeyed all its promises would be fulfilled. There is a saying the Messiah would come if the Law were kept even for a single day. It was in this spirit that all that was good in Judaism devoted itself to the study of the Law and how it best might be observed.

An example of this tendency in its extreme form is found in the curious sect, Zadokite, Damascene, call it what you will, revealed by

the comparatively recent discovery of an obscure fragment relating its rise and progress. Here it is sufficient to say that certain Jewish enthusiasts, disgusted by the worldliness of Jerusalem, retired to the deserts near Damascus, and organised a community which resembled that of the fugitives from Egypt during their sojourn in the wilderness. They evidently felt that, only as nomads, could they observe the Law as it was kept by those who had originally received it in the desert of Sinai. The language of the document is so obscure that, with the lack of all other evidence, it is impossible to advance more than conjectures as to the nature of the movement. Some one was evidently to arise as a Messianic deliverer in accordance with Balaam's prophecy of "A Star which should come out of Jacob." But all depended on the right observance of the Law.

The disturbed state of Palestine under the Roman rule was due mainly to the fact that the presence of an alien government hindered the Jews from making practicable their ideal state in which the Law could be properly obeyed. Palestine was the one spot on earth

where it could be carried out in its entirety, because the Temple was there and the tithe could be paid to the Lord out of the produce of His own Land. Consequently when the people were numbered and enrolled for taxation by the Romans, when the presence of heathen in their midst was encouraged, when the princes of the Herodian house lived in amity with the Romans and adopted many of their customs, the Jewish nation, as we learn from Josephus, suffered from a fever of discontent, the symptoms of which were manifested in rebellions, fantastic dreams of independence and vengeance on the heathen, and wild apocalyptic hopes. For this distemper the two remedies were a strict observance of the Law, and a highly spiritual conception of religion.

Nor were these so incompatible as may appear to us. To observe the Law in its entirety it was necessary to devote a lifetime to its study, to sever oneself from society, often to deny oneself the necessaries of life. The Rabbi was an ascetic, not in the spirit of a monk, but of a student who was ready to endure hardship in the pursuit of divine learn-

ing. Further the keeping of the Law in its entirety isolated him not only from the Gentiles, but from the majority of his countrymen who were involved in the business of life. A strict observance of the Law occupied much time; and the pious Jew saw others become rich and prosperous, whilst he had to live a life of separation and obscurity. Possibly the "poor," "humble," and "meek" are not those whom we describe as economically depressed, but the zealous students of the Law who had deliberately chosen poverty in order to live in obedience to God's will. How then are we to account for the sayings of Jesus against the pride and wealth of the Pharisees? Nobody who knows anything of human nature can doubt that they were proud. It is very much easier to affect humility than to be really humble; and, no matter what a man's religion may be, he is generally not a little pleased with himself for observing its precepts better than the rest of the world. Some were covetous; there were probably some Pharisees who were covetous and even devoured widows' houses. Anyhow it is a remarkable fact that very religious people, if only because they give up so

many of the pleasures of life, often become wealthy. But as a rule the devout Jew must have been really earnest in his religion; and though in the Gospel, and also in the Jewish writings the hypocrisy of some is denounced, it is fairly certain that there was much genuine piety among the people.

At the same time there was no little unrest of which the rebellion of Judas of Galilee in A.D. 6 was a symptom. His fatal watchword, "No King but the Lord," meant the renunciation of all human authority. Josephus relates the appearance of many impostors who from time to time led the deluded multitude into excesses. Josephus does not call these "Christs" nor say that any claimed to be the Messiah; and the only evidence that any one did so is in the Gospel expression, "False Christs and false prophets" (Mark XIII: 22; Matt. XXIV: 24). Still it appears to be quite possible that the Messianic title was often assumed by patriot leaders; and, if so, it probably meant much the same as "Mahdi" does in Mohammedan countries. This fully accounts for Jesus' unwillingness to be recognised as the Christ and for His dissociating

Himself from anything like a patriotic movement. It also explains why His enemies were so eager to bring a charge of sedition against Him. But the causes of Jewish hostility to Jesus deserve serious consideration elsewhere.

One of the results of legalism was the cessation of prophecy. When the Law had become stereotyped in a written code the need for explanation was more felt than exhortation. It had become an accepted fact that the Law was the expression of God's Will and the formula "Thus saith the Lord" was no longer impressive. God had spoken in the Law: that was sufficient. Thus the scribe or rabbi took the place of the prophet and the later days of ancient Judaism were days of interpretation in which the more sober piety of the nation found a scope for its energies.

Some time between A.D. 20-30 a man appeared in the guise not of an insurgent patriot, nor of a rabbi, nor of an apocalyptist but of a representative of ancient prophecy. John the Baptist is one of the most mysterious figures in religious history. His influence must have been very far-reaching, his personality

most impressive, and yet we are almost in the dark about him. To the early Christians his connection with Jesus was evidently most significant; but Josephus, though he has nothing to indicate that he considered the movement other than a Jewish ascetic one, evidently felt something of its importance. There are no well-known, rabbinical traditions concerning John.

Let us begin by marshalling the facts. The Third Gospel has an account of his birth which one may without prejudice call legendary because it was written some decades after the event, and expresses the belief of a generation to which the Baptist had become chiefly of interest as the Elijah who had been the forerunner of the Messiah. One cannot fail to notice how thoroughly Hebraic the Gospel narrative found in St. Luke is. No one who has even an elementary knowledge of Hebrew, and has done ever so little work on the Septuagint can fail to perceive that the opening narratives of the Gospel are Hebraic. They can be translated into Hebrew almost at sight. The Birth-story is redolent of the Old Testament. A barren couple, Zacharias, a blame-

less priest, and Elizabeth his wife, also of priestly stock, are promised by an angel a child in their old age. Zacharias at the time is ministering in the Temple. For his incredulity he is struck with dumbness. When the child is named, he recovers his speech and prophesies. The boy, as he grew up, withdrew to the desert until the time of his manifestation to Israel (Luke I: 5-23, 57-80).

The date of this narrative is uncertain and must remain so, but its Jewish character is unmistakable. The only Christian element about it is that John the Baptist is announced as going before the Lord "in the Spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." This would imply that he was the forerunner of Jesus. Whether it may not be possible that Luke, the author of the Gospel, has copied some ancient story of the birth of the Baptist, preserved in Hebrew or Aramaic, is an open question; and, if so, the birth-story of Jesus, which is interwoven with it, might belong to a very early period of Christian, and possibly even pre-

Christian literature. At any rate John is here represented as born miraculously, and the close parallel between the story and the birth of Isaac, the age of the parents, their incredulity, the angelic announcement, are significant, as is also the command to bind the child by a Nazarite vow similar to Samson's.

We pass from the birth-story to that of the preaching of John, still keeping to the Third Gospel. Here we find a separate section devoted to the subject; and the baptism of Jesus added as supplementary to it, as it is in the other Gospels. But Luke's account of the Baptist is *sui generis*. It begins like one of the ancient prophecies with a notice of the contemporary rulers to indicate the date, and with the Hebraic formula, "The word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness" (Luke III:1-2). His message was to warn the people of the wrath to come and to tell them not to rely on their descent from Abraham but to repent. Thus far he follows Matthew and Mark but after this, this evangelist puts into the mouth of the Baptist words of practical advice to the common people, the taxgatherers, and the soldiers;

and it is a sign of his power of discrimination that the words of John would sound strange in the mouth of Jesus as St. Luke describes Him, not that they are not wise and valuable, but the tone seems different (Luke III: 7-17).

Then follows a brief notice, "Many other and different things did John preach exhorting the people. But Herod, the tetrarch, being reproved by him about his brother's wife, Herodias, and all the wicked things Herod had done, added to his sins by shutting up John in prison (Luke III: 18-20)." No account is given of John's death, in the story of the daughter of Herodias, as found in Matthew and Mark, though it is implied.

We turn to Josephus who relates that the popular opinion was that Herod, the tetrarch, because of his crime in putting the Baptist to death, suffered an ignominious defeat at the hands of his father-in-law, Aretas, whose daughter he had divorced. I must call your attention to this very important passage reminding you that Josephus had no particular interest in the matter. He is not to my mind a great historian; but he is unrivalled as a

raconteur and he is in his element in relating a bit of gossip the common talk of a generation before he was born. This is what he says: "Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and that very justly as a punishment of what he did against John that was called the Baptist; for Herod slew him, though he was a good man and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism." (I reserve the historian's important comment on this till later.) "Now when many others came in crowds about him, for they were greatly moved by hearing his words, Herod who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise rebellion (for they seemed to do anything he should advise), thought it best by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties, by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it should be too late. Accordingly, he was sent a prisoner (out of Herod's suspicious temper), to Machærus, the castle I be-

fore mentioned, and was there put to death. Now the Jews had an opinion that the destruction of this army was sent as a punishment upon Herod, as a mark of God's displeasure against him" (Antiq. XVIII: 5-2).

If then we consider that Josephus, except in one very suspicious passage (Antiq. XVIII: 3-3), does not so much as mention Jesus, and that he is writing full sixty years after the event, we must admit that John the Baptist occupied an important place in Jewish thought, even after the destruction of Jerusalem, and that the movement inaugurated by him had some abiding influence. That he was forgotten by the days of the writing down of the Mishna is not extraordinary when we try to find anything definite about Hillel, Shammai and Gamaliel, the elder. We now return to Luke to whose Gospel special attention here is due because the theme is carried on in his second book, the Acts of the Apostles, where his allusions to John are part of a deliberate purpose.

From the first passage there is a question about fasting in which the disciples of John are coupled with those of the Pharisees, as

ascetics in contrast with the followers of Jesus (Matt. IX: 14; Mark II: 18; Luke V: 33). It would almost appear that there were at the time two distinct religious movements—John's, distinguished for its severity, and that of Jesus, Who with His followers mixed freely with the people (Matt. XI: 18-19). In the second instance John sends two disciples to ask if Jesus is "the Coming One," presumably the expected Messiah (Matt. XI: 2). Thirdly, there is Jesus' question whether the baptism of John was from heaven or of men (Matt. XXI: 25). All these are found in the first three Gospels, and were evidently considered very important sayings of Jesus. Now it is noticeable that the object of all these, despite apparent discrepancies, is to bring out the close connection between John's movement and that of Jesus. There is also an increasing emphasis upon the fact that John is Elijah who prepares the way for Jesus as Messiah. This, according to Matthew and Mark, Jesus Himself declares after His Transfiguration (Matt. XVII: 3 ff.; Mark IX: 2 ff.; Luke IX: 28 ff.). In another passage in Matthew He tells the disciples as a

mystery, prefaced by the words, "If ye will receive it, this is the Elias which was for to come" (Matt. XI: 14).

Before one leaves the Gospels and comes to the Acts one may enquire how far Jesus worked in conscious harmony with John. Here the evidence appears to be somewhat contradictory, as for example the account of the Baptism of Jesus. According to all the Evangelists Jesus came to be baptised by John. There is a curious saying in the extra-canonical "Gospel according to the Hebrews," that Jesus, asked by his relatives if He were going to be baptised by John, replied, "What sin have I committed, unless the word which I have spoken be in itself sin?" This statement is less startling to an orthodox Christian when he recalls the tradition, still strong in the Eastern Church, that the Baptism was the supreme crisis in the life of Jesus. This may be implied in Mark, where Jesus goes from Nazareth in Galilee to be baptised. On His coming out of the water He sees the heavens parting asunder and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. A voice from heaven says to Him, "Thou art my beloved

Son, in Thee I am well pleased" (Mark I: 9-11). Luke repeats this story in his own fashion. Jesus came with the people to be baptised, and, after his baptism (Luke III: 21-22) the Spirit came down like a dove in bodily form upon Him as he prayed. According to one reading the voice said, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee." Matthew is the only early evangelist who makes John recognise Jesus and exclaim, "I have need to be baptised of Thee and comest Thou to me?" (Matt. III: 14.) By the time of the Fourth Gospel the tradition is fixed. The Baptist, however, does not recognise Jesus till the Spirit is seen to descend (John I: 31). Then he acknowledges Jesus to be the Son of God. According to the other passages already cited John and Jesus do not seem to have worked together in concert.

The discussion of this point, however, cannot be continued till the passages in Acts are considered because in them we see how important it was in the eyes of the earliest Christian writers to connect the work of Jesus with that of John. The first point to be noticed is the extreme stress laid upon the rite

of baptism. There is no record of Jesus having used it except in the Fourth Gospel (John III: 22; IV: 1-2); and in two very uncertain passages He is said to have commanded it to His disciples after the Resurrection (Matt. XXVIII: 19; Mark XVI: 16). Nor is it enjoined in what is perhaps the earliest source of Acts (Acts III-IV). But elsewhere it is insisted upon as a condition, not only of admission to the Church, but also of the reception of the Spirit, a gift which made Christians different from the rest of the world. Here there is a marked distinction made between the rite as practised by the Christians and the baptism of John.

The object of Jewish ceremonial washings, which of course include baptism, is purification. John preached repentance as a preparation for the coming Kingdom of the Heavens and according to the Christian tradition, preserved in the Gospel of Mark, those who came to be baptised made a public confession of sin. Baptism was therefore symbolical of the purification of repentant sinners.

Josephus, however, has another explanation. Possibly he was aware of the Christian view;

but, be that as it may, he disclaims it, saying that the baptism of John was acceptable to God "not because it was a putting away of sins, but for the purification of the body; supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified before-hand by righteousness." I think the clue to this is the *Life* of Josephus in which he says that he associated in his youth with an ascetic called Banus who "bathed himself in cold water both night and day to preserve his chastity." In other words baptism was a discipline practised by those who belonged to the inner circle of John's disciples.

But Christian baptism in the Acts and the rest of the New Testament had a different purpose; it was neither purificatory nor disciplinary but sacramental. This notion is never prominent in Judaism. The Law thoroughly understands symbolism. The baptism of a proselyte signifies the putting away of the impurity of his life as a Gentile, and the idea of purifying streams is familiar to all readers of the Old Testament. Equally intelligible is the idea of the new birth. A proselyte, whatever his age, is a newly born son of Israel. But Christian baptism from a very early time

meant much more than this. It meant that all who underwent the ceremony received some special gift of God, often manifested by signs, and also by a change of nature. In other words it was a baptism with the Spirit. This distinguished it from the baptism of John.

Yet the writer of the Acts is most evidently anxious to connect the Christian movement with that of the Baptist; and this is the more remarkable because, though St. Paul lays great stress on this sacrament, he never so much as mentions the Baptist in any of his Epistles. This can be accounted for only by inferring that among the Jewish Christians and among the Jews generally the movement inaugurated by John was a very important one, and that to connect Jesus with him was to emphasise His claim to be the Messiah. When we pass outside the pale of Judaism to Paul's Gentile converts, the Baptist fades into obscurity and his work, though it kept its place in Christian tradition, was forgotten. That this should happen to any Jewish teacher before the fall of Jerusalem is easily explained by the disappearance of almost all Jewish sects and parties after the great catastrophe.

That Josephus should have carefully mentioned the Baptist is a testimony to his influence, but by the time the *Antiquities of the Jews* was written very little was known about him and Josephus can be shown to be inaccurate.

The whole subject is one which ought to be as interesting to Jews as to Christians. It is a lost chapter in the history of religion. Possibly John preached a Kingdom of Heaven contemporaneously with Jesus, but independently; and there were thus two great appeals to the conscience of the nation to prepare for the rule of God upon earth. Before this was that of the followers of Judas of Galilee, who proclaimed, "No king but the Lord," but that was anarchic and led to revolution and disaster, whilst those of John and Jesus, and also the Pharisaic movement were essentially moral appeals for a change of life. John's preaching is lost, that of the Pharisees was in the direction of a strict, but not wholly illiberal, interpretation of the Law. The message of Jesus was addressed to Jews; and whilst not opposed to the Law, gave it a different application, and in its general tend-

ency resembled the preaching of the ancient prophets, who contrasted the formalism of their age with the observance of the moral law demanded of Israel by God. After this we must consider Jesus as a Jewish teacher and the rise of a community in Judaism, which recognised in Him the Messiah, in whom the hopes of Israel were fulfilled. The whole question demands careful investigation, for we are in the dark about what the religion of Palestine actually was at the time of Jesus.

Chapter II

JESUS AS A JEWISH TEACHER

A learned Talmudist once said to a class of Christians, "Your Lord did not take the *holy* of Rabbinical literature, but the holy of holies." The first three Gospels have been described as more properly belonging to the Old Testament than to the New, and there is some truth in this judgment. For the atmosphere of all the story of Jesus' ministry is essentially Jewish. He was a Jew, who lived among Jews, and addressed His teaching particularly, and indeed solely, to His own countrymen; and much would have been unintelligible if addressed to Gentiles, for it is not possible to communicate one's ideas to any one unless there is a common background. The men to whom Jesus spoke knew the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, and followed the Tradition. Jesus did not declare new truths but He emphasised and gave a fresh life to the old ones. He would never have secured

a hearing had He promulgated an entirely new philosophy, or told about a God unknown to His hearers. He said little about Himself. His message was the ancient prophetic one—God was about to visit His people as their Judge, and a great trial was at hand out of which the true Israelite was to emerge unscathed. It was the old message of the deliverance of the remnant given long ago by the prophet Isaiah. It was the same with the ethics of Jesus, which certainly demand attention, especially because there is a considerable division of opinion regarding them.

It is the fashion at the present time for some Christians to say that Jesus taught something which had been unheard of before His appearance, that He made a new revelation of God and introduced a new conception of man's duty to his neighbour. In popular language He taught "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" as they had never been taught before. But this statement is somewhat misleading, although Jesus was undeniably an absolutely unique teacher. But the power of His teaching was not so much in its novelty as in His manner of imparting it.

Peoples and nations are in different moral stages; but right and wrong do not change materially. Read the opening chapters of the Prophet Amos, possibly one of the oldest parts of the Bible. What does he denounce? Avarice, treachery, cruelty, oppression of the poor, forestalling the markets, wanton extravagance. Can it be supposed that, even in the days of Amos, these were revelations, that men then thought that it was right to torture the conquered women of Gilead or to burn the bones of the King of Edom, to break a plighted word, or to grind the faces of the poor? Some may have done these things; but they knew as well as ourselves that they could plead no justification; and their conscience smote them so greatly that the priest of Bethel said of Amos, "the land is not able to bear his words." It is not necessary to confine oneself to the Bible. The Greek tragedians, the Roman satirists and moralists tell us the same story. They condone some sins in a way which repels us; but they know full well that they are sins and they would have acknowledged the last part of the Ten Commandments as readily as any of us. There is not much to be

discovered in the sphere of morality, except the extremely different problem of how to observe its laws.

There is also a school who maintain that Jesus taught an entirely new doctrine of God. According to these, God was an unloving Taskmaster to the Jews, whereas Jesus revealed Him as a loving Father. It is not necessary to dwell on the fallacy of this. What is the motive of the Book of Deuteronomy? Surely the love of God. What is the reproach of Israel constantly found in the Prophets? The sin of ingratitude. Why did the author of that long acrostic Psalm CXIX think of the Law? Not as an intolerable yoke; or he could not say, "Lord, what love have I unto Thy Law." Jesus came to declare the will of God as the Jews knew Him. And when we are brought face to face with Him the question is not one of theology, but of service.

Before discussing the ethics and teaching of Jesus a very important question has to be faced. What do we really know about Him? There have been people who have maintained that He was not an historical figure at all, that He was invented for the purpose of a new

cult which sprang up suddenly in the Roman Empire. An immense amount of ingeniously perverted learning has been expended on this subject.

Yet one is bound to admit that we may have no evidence about Jesus which we can unhesitatingly pronounce to be first hand. It is extremely doubtful whether the Gospel which is "according to Matthew" is by the disciple who bore that name. It is at least highly probable that the Gospel according to John belongs to the third generation after the appearance of Jesus. Those "according to Mark and Luke" are professedly by men who did not belong to the circle of the Twelve. Jesus Himself left nothing in writing. Peter may have written the epistles which now bear his name, but even then it would not help us much as the whole tone is unlike that of the Gospels. It is conceivable that an epistle by James, the brother of the Lord, has survived, and it contains some precepts given by Jesus in the Gospels; but very few now consider it genuine. We are left therefore with the evidence of men who wrote at least thirty years after the death of Jesus. Does not this lend at least some

colour to the theory that Jesus was the imaginary hero of a religious romance?

Let us try to answer this apart from such considerations that if we do not accept the existence of Jesus it will be difficult to prove the existence of almost anybody who lived even a few centuries ago, or that so vast a movement as the Christian religion, which is now professed at least by nearly a third of the entire human race, could have originated in an imaginary personage. Rather let us ask whether, after an examination of the Synoptic Gospels, it is possible to come to any other conclusion than that Jesus was a human being who gathered a company of disciples and taught them certain truths and principles of good living. That after Jesus was put to death He rose from the grave may be questioned, but all must assent to the proposition that His immediate followers firmly believed that He had done so; and before the earliest Christian writings had appeared this was the accepted belief of the entire community. Indeed, without a belief in the Resurrection, Christianity as a religion would never have even begun to exist.

Notice the inevitable consequence. Jesus always appears as a miraculous personage, as One who has transcended all previous human experience. Miracles of the resuscitation of persons really or apparently dead are recorded, but nothing is related of what they did afterwards. Jesus was believed to have talked, and even eaten and drunk with His disciples, before He was taken from them into Heaven. What was the result? All the recorded preaching about Him, in the Acts of the Apostles, and the letters of Paul treat of Him as a divine Person. He is the Saviour, the Messiah, the coming Judge of the world, the Lord and Master of His followers. We need not here enter upon the vexed question of how far Jesus was considered dogmatically to be God by His followers; but certainly from the very earliest period He was acknowledged to be something closely approaching to it.

This makes the Gospels so remarkable. Despite the undoubted fact of the acceptance of the Divine Mystery connected with Jesus, we find in them a very human character, and it is noteworthy that in the Third Gospel the author draws the portrait of the Master on

earth in this aspect, and in the Acts represents Him as being preached almost without any reference to His ministry and teaching. We can now embark on a discussion of His teaching and influence on those with whom He came in contact. Let us take first the Sermon on the Mount, as the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel are called. It is not a Sermon in the sense of being a report of a formal address delivered by Jesus. It is rather a collection of sayings of His arranged with very great art. As it stands it is a model for all sermons. It is short, it is full of wise advice made plain by homely illustration, it teaches a morality which all ought to practice, the language is simple and intelligible to all, and there is no forced rhetoric or effort to be eloquent. It invariably goes straight to the point.

It opens with nine benedictions on men after God's own heart, the poor, mourners, the meek, those who hunger for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted, those who are reviled by men.

These are the salt of the earth, God's city set on a hill, the light of the world. These

may not be satisfied with formal righteousness, if they would form part of God's kingdom.

Then the Preacher explains His meaning by taking two commandments and three precepts of the Law. Murder is not merely the slaying of a man, but indulging in all the feelings which prompt the action. All forms of hatred or vindictiveness are thus forbidden in the Sixth Commandment. In the same way all forms of impure thoughts are prohibited in the Seventh, and a much stricter law of marriage is given than that revealed to Moses. Oaths are forbidden because no man should have two standards of truth, one under oath and another in ordinary conversation. His no should always mean *no* and his yes *yes*. It is enough to say that the whole teaching is addressed to Jews; it is assumed that the audience is well acquainted with the Law, though there is not a word which does not appeal to the common conscience of all humanity. "Be merciful, do not be ostentatious in your religion, love your enemies, give more rather than less to those who ask you in their need, do not torment yourself with worldly cares, trust God as you would a loving father, strive after perfection."

There may be nothing new in this teaching, but no one can deny that it is true, and that this world would be a happier place if men's lives were ordered in accordance with it. But if this moral teaching is easy to understand, it is not by any means easy to carry into practice, especially as the ideal of Jesus is "Ye shall be perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect" (Matt. V: 48).

One way of accounting for the stern morality of Jesus is by explaining that it is what the Germans call *interim ethik*. It is maintained that Jesus believed He was announcing the end of the world and that it was to come in a very short time—in a few months or even days. Under such circumstances it was perfectly possible, and even reasonable, to love one's enemies or take no thought for the morrow, as this would assure immediate salvation; and, after all, very shortly indeed one's enemies would all be destroyed, and the believer would be comfortably provided for in the coming Kingdom. This is an example, not of the cynicism or wickedness, but of the blind stupidity and lack of humour of certain theologians. It seems a very easy way of evading

precepts which seem impossible to carry out; but it is not even that. There are numbers of people, and have been in all history, who believe in an immediate catastrophe like that which Jesus foretold; but hardly any of them have literally carried out His teaching, even for a few days. The simple fact is that Jesus, and in some measure all great prophets before and since, have drawn down upon them the indignation of narrower minds by declaring principles of action in themselves actually sound, instead of giving man legal formulæ. This is why the Jews of His age were so angered by Him, and why most of His professed followers have tried to explain away His utterances. It is comparatively easy to submit to rules and regulations which affect only external actions, but do not change the disposition of our minds; but it ought to be an object common alike to all who profess a revealed religion never to be satisfied till they have transformed the inner lives of mankind. This after all is the true object of both the Old and New Testaments.

Jesus is represented as having provoked the enmity of two classes of the Jews of His time:

the priests at Jerusalem, and the sect of the Pharisees. We may dismiss the priests very briefly. The Talmud is a deal harder on them than the New Testament, and Josephus, who was himself a priest, has very little to tell us to the credit of the higher ranks of the hierarchy in the last days of the Jewish state. These people were responsible for the death of Jesus, though He does not seem to have denounced them or to have interfered in the religious politics of His age. The chief opponents of Jesus were, not the selfish worldly priests, but the Pharisees who represented the best Judaism of their age. That so much is said of the controversy between the great Teacher and the members of this sect is accounted for by the fact that Jesus was not one of those reformers who attack what everybody condemns, and thereby gain, with general applause, a reputation for sanctity. He devoted His attention rather to pointing out the shortcomings of those who were striving most earnestly for righteousness. What was so pathetic in His eye was not human wickedness so much as the stupidity of the best of men. All doubtless must remember how in

the Talmud there are seven classes of Pharisees who are described with some insight and even humour. Two of these only are worth anything: the rest are either conscious hypocrites or self-deceivers. I suppose this is true of the religious public in most ages. In itself Pharisaism was no bad thing. It was in touch with such movements for reform as those of the Baptist and Jesus; in one instance indeed the followers of John and the Pharisees joined in protesting against the alleged laxity of Jesus' disciples in respect to fasting (Mark II: 18). The Pharisees, according to Luke, on the whole maintained a certain friendliness to Jesus, and after His death some even joined the infant Church (Acts XV: 5); and their honoured leader, Gamaliel, is believed to have defended the apostles against the persecuting priests (Acts V: 34). Jesus is recorded to have been entertained in the house of a certain Simon the Pharisee (Luke VII: 36 ff.).

Nor is this to be wondered at. Pharisaism was an enlightened form of Judaism. It countenanced neither the fanaticism of the irreconcilable party nor the isolation of Essen-

ism, nor the harshness of the aristocratic priests. Josephus is our witness for the leniency of the Pharisees as judges, and their unwillingness to shed blood. Their legislation was designed to make the observance of the Law less impossible than that of rival schools which insisted on its literal interpretation. After the destruction of Jerusalem they became the means of saving the national religion by their wise moderation.

Why then are they represented as having been so unsparingly attacked by the fiercest invectives of Jesus? Possibly for two reasons: the first is that parts of the earliest Gospels are polemic in the sense of reflecting later controversies between Jew and Gentile and putting into the mouth of Jesus some of the current arguments used by His later followers. But this cannot be the sole explanation; and one is compelled to believe that Jesus used very severe language to the Pharisees, and that He did so because He believed that, zealous as they were for the God of Israel, their idea of obedience to Him was destructive of the principles of true religion, and He felt the tragedy of it the more because He knew

the Pharisaic party to be deeply in earnest in their desire to serve God. He also recognised that much in His day which passed for religion was mere externalism, which did not affect the heart; and this was called in Greek "hypocrisy," acting a part with nothing genuine about it. This is the most wonderful feature in Jesus as a Teacher. He pierced the externals of religion, and, as no one else, went to the root of the matter. None of His followers seemed capable of this; and they set to work to make Him, not only the opponent and in a measure the destroyer of the old Pharisaism, but the creator of a new one which only established a new literalism in place of the old. Not that He was an opponent of the ancient Law. He is always represented as scrupulous in His obedience to it. What He opposed was the popular idea as to its purpose. This was embodied in what is called the Tradition. The first is the law of the Sabbath and is a good example.

The Sabbath was, as it seemed to the external world, the most outstanding feature in Judaism. The satirist Juvenal says that the first symptom of being influenced by that re-

ligion in a Roman family was that they kept the Sabbath. In the latter part of the Old Testament the sign of a good Jew was observing God's Sabbaths. To break the Sabbath was to outrage Jewish sentiment at its tenderest point; but Jesus, though suspected of laxity on the subject, is not accused of attempting to abrogate observance of the Seventh Day. What He actually did was to lay down a principle based on the Law, that an act of mercy might be done at any time. In one passage, however, He did not censure His disciples for plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath; and this is of special interest because His method of instruction is so rabbinical that it could only have been addressed to Jews, as the argument would appeal only to them. The story could almost be rewritten in Talmudic form. The disciples of Jesus pluck ears of corn; the Pharisees rebuke them; Jesus pronounces a decision in rabbinical style. David and his men ate the shewbread, the Law allows the priests to do sacrificial work on the Sabbath. Therefore necessity allows a certain abrogation of the strict Law. For God gave the Sabbath as a boon to man that he might

have rest from labour and did not impose it as a burthen. "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." Jesus, it is true, seems to have given offence by healing the sick on the Sabbath—here all four Gospels are in agreement—but the point of all these stories seems to have been that the object of Jesus was not to protest against the Law, but to show plainly that He regarded its essential purpose to be, not to impose rules of life, but to inculcate mercy and the love of God. In this He is in full agreement with the ancient prophets.

There is another passage which Christian interpreters, and especially Protestants, quote to show that Jesus intended to abrogate the Law. It is the simile of the piece of new cloth in an old garment and new wine in old skins which is taken to imply that "The religion I preach is new and incompatible with the old." Fasting is only ordered in the Law on the day of Atonement; but it had become as important in Judaism, as it is in other religions. The disciples of John and of the Pharisees (notice the juxtaposition) fasted often and the disciples of Jesus did not. Jesus

does not condemn fasting. On the contrary He asks the question, "Can the companions of a bridegroom fast on a joyful occasion?" The answer is obviously No. Jesus goes on to say that His disciples are full of joyous enthusiasm because He is to them "the Bridegroom," therefore they cannot fast and it would be unreasonable to impose an ascetic Law. But He warns them that a time of sorrow will come and the Bridegroom will be taken away and then the time for fasting will come indeed. The similes He uses are intended to show that the enthusiasm produced by the discovery of a cause of joy must not be unduly restrained by a prudent teacher (Mark II: 18-22).

The last instance is a very controversial passage about the Law and Tradition, and here the Jew can rightly object that he is aware of no tradition like the one alleged. This may be so; but what is quoted is a piece of bad casuistry which is conceivable. The question is raised by the objection that the disciples of Jesus did not wash their hands before eating. In this chapter (Mark VII) it is obvious that the intention of Jesus was to declare that external acts of obedience were

of no value as compared with a right spirit within. Hands unwashed before eating are unimportant, but a pure heart is vital. Then comes this curious passage about tradition. It may be a genuine utterance (*logion*) of Jesus, or a fragment of anti-Judaic Christian controversy. Anyhow the teaching of Jesus is not contrary to that of Rabbinism, but entirely in accord with its insistence that no religious obligation can outweigh a man's duty to his parents. If I may venture my opinion I think it is quite possible that some teacher had suggested as a wretched piece of casuistry that the Korban relieved a man from supporting his father and mother. This could never have been sound Judaism. That the plea was made, no one who knows human nature can refuse to believe. In all ages there have been men who preferred ostentatious gifts to religion to family duty. For we must not forget that if men differ profoundly as to how they should serve God, they are as a rule in agreement as to their methods of deceiving Him, and evading those commands which are inconvenient to observe.

Jesus is presented in the Gospel account of

the Galilean ministry as devoting much time to the healing of diseases and to the alleviation of those who were believed to be tormented by evil spirits. Nothing is more perplexing in these days than the stories of miracles in the Bible. The fact that people believed them to occur and even saw what seemed to them to be miracles is beyond dispute; and Jesus, like most religious teachers of antiquity, is credited with abundance of marvellous acts. But some of His utterances show that He did not claim authority for His teaching on account of His miracles, but even concealed them from the public eye, and actually charged some of His patients with secrecy. To many of us they are more valuable as evidences of character than of power. Indifference to the sufferings of others and the comfortable doctrine of Job's friends, that he probably deserved his grievous affliction, were no part of the religion taught by Jesus, and His followers realised the duty of special care for the sick. In this it is just to say the Jewish physicians were their rivals, and the early Rabbis as well as the Christian teachers were credited with miraculous powers.

What is called liberal Christianity seeks to minimise the teaching of Jesus as to a sudden catastrophic end of the world. To do so appears to be unhistorical; and whatever He taught) and we cannot be sure that His words are exactly reported) apocalyptic hopes were very important factors in the spread of His religion. Whilst, however, all Christians professed and still profess a belief in the second coming of their Master, their leaders followed the Jewish Rabbis in discountenancing those who presumed upon a speedy manifestation of divine power and the dissolution of the world order, as likely to prove a hindrance to the discharge of the duties of life.

We must here limit ourselves to the work of Jesus as a teacher with the object of showing that in it there was nothing incompatible with the best side of Judaism. Doubtless He is very severe on the official teachers of His time, yet Gospels as we have them are written with at least a side-glance at the controversies of the first age of Christianity. At the same time, the picture presented does not seem to give an unfavourable or malicious account of the Judaism of the first century,

at least before the fall of Jerusalem. Those who disputed with Jesus were evidently religious and deeply in earnest. They did not grasp the deep truths He was trying to make them realise, but when have men understood the teaching of a great prophet? Many people were undoubtedly narrow in their views, harsh in their judgments, and ostentatious in their piety, and they will continue to be so as long as the world lasts. Jesus was indignant at this, and His indignation was righteous. He is not more unsparing in His denunciation of the vices of His age than were the prophets of old. But with deep insight He denounced, not the sins which we all instinctively reprobate, but those which, till we realise their nature, we take to be actual virtues: narrowness of view, severe judgments of others, satisfaction with an external piety, which is compatible with hardness of heart. Jesus was greater than the Judaism of His age but He was also superior to any Christianity which has succeeded Him, and what He taught appeals to all that is best in man and is of the essence of the spirit of the revelation of the Holy One to Moses.

Chapter III

THE GOSPEL SPREADS TO THE GENTILES

Thus far we have been dealing with two exclusively Jewish movements, the preaching of the Baptist and of Jesus. How very Jewish that of Jesus was is seen in the fact that later when Judaism and Christianity were parting company there were warnings to faithful Jews not to read the Gospels (*Evangelia*). This shows that at any rate the first three Gospels were sufficiently popular among Jewish readers to necessitate a warning against perusing them. In the great Christian dialogue between Justin Martyr, the Christian philosopher, and a party of Jews, the Jewish spokesman, Trypho, admits that he has studied the Gospels.

But it is necessary here to resume where we left off. We have been considering Jesus as a Prophet, and a Teacher whose controversy with the religious authorities was on the ques-

tion how the Law should be observed. He maintained that the important thing was to preserve the spirit in which it was conceived, whilst His opponents laid special stress on the literal observance of its commands. Everything was changed by His death. Into this subject, despite its importance, it is best here not to enter. It was, as all admit, a great crime, or a great blunder, on the part of the priests of Jerusalem, whom none of their contemporaries or those near their time are able to praise. Peter, the first Christian preacher and the chief of the Apostles of Jesus, takes the more charitable view. "I think that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." The reason perhaps that he spoke with so little bitterness was that all the followers of Jesus believed it was the purpose of God that He should suffer death on the cross. There let us leave it. This was followed by the Resurrection, which was accepted by all the believers as an undoubted fact (Acts III: 7).

No scholars are now fully agreed on the interpretation of the history of the first age of Christianity. Our information is confined

to the first five chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, extending roughly over some four hundred lines of ordinary print. The book forms the second of two, traditionally ascribed to St. Luke, a companion of St. Paul, who may have here used some almost contemporary sources for his narrative. Despite much criticism having been employed in dissecting this account, it appears, though occasionally vague, to be consistent and probable.

After Jesus had finally withdrawn His presence from those who followed Him, they formed themselves into a small society under twelve men with Peter at their head, whom He had chosen as His special companions, and were known as the Apostles. These resided in Jerusalem and began to preach Jesus as the Messiah, declaring that the proof that He was so chosen was that God had raised Him from the dead. The author of Acts has given as specimens two addresses delivered by Peter; and their genuineness is not so important as whether they convey the correct impression as to what the teaching of the first Christians was. It is prefaced in Acts by

two miracles: (1) by the Christians speaking with strange tongues when the Spirit descended upon them; (2) by Peter and John healing a lame man in the Temple (Acts II-III).

(1) The sign of the tongues is a fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh" (Joel II: 28-32). The reason for the outpouring of the Spirit is that Jesus has been raised from the dead, in accordance with Psalm XVI, in which David spoke, not of himself, but of his descendant, the Messiah. This is given as a proof that Jesus is the Messiah (Acts II: 16 ff.).

(2) Again, in the next chapter, a lame man was healed, not by any power inherent in Peter and John, but by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, who had been accused before Pontius Pilate and had been crucified at the request of the rulers of the nation, though Pilate thought Him guiltless. They acted in ignorance; and God had brought it to pass because it had been foretold in Scripture that the Messiah should suffer—Jesus will return at the day of restoration; and He is the

Prophet foretold by Moses, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up . . . like unto me" (Deut. XVIII: 15).

It is said that this preaching was received with much favour by the common people; but that the priests of the highest rank regarded it with suspicion and that they caused a moderate, but ineffective, persecution to be inaugurated, which was stopped at the suggestion of Gamaliel, an influential Pharisee. The general purport of the narrative is that the Jewish people were in no ways repelled by the idea that Jesus was the Messiah; and that the hostility of the priesthood was political rather than religious. This is in accordance with the story of the Galilean ministry of Jesus and His relations with those against whom He disputed. The object of the priests is quite intelligible, namely, to avoid any possible disturbance by sanctioning a movement which might arouse fanaticism. They were like Herod Antipas, whom Josephus represents as having killed the Baptist, "lest he should be the cause of a revolution, which the tetrarch might have reason to regret."

Our object at present is not to discuss the

attitude of the Jewish authorities, but of the Jews generally toward the new religion. At the end of this section the author of Acts represents it as very popular and attractive even among the priestly order, which was numerous in Jerusalem, and not as a rule in sympathy with the aristocratic high-priestly families (Acts VI: 7).

In Chapter VI we meet with a popular outburst against the Christians, not against the original community, but against a new group of Jews who had embraced the Faith. These were the Hellenists, or Greek speakers, at the head of whom the Apostles had placed seven chosen men, the most prominent of whom bore the Greek name of Stephen. The natives of Jerusalem seem to have had nothing to do with the matter. Stephen disputed with the synagogue of foreign Jews, Libertines (whoever they were), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Cilicians, and Asians (inhabitants of the province of Asia). These accused him of blasphemy against Moses and God, and of saying that Jesus the Nazarene would destroy the Temple and change the customs which Moses had given. Here was the real cause of offence, not

doctrinal but religious innovation. A form of Christianity had arisen which threatened the ancestral observances. The accusation, trial, and stoning of Stephen are related so as to bring out the parallel with the condemnation of Jesus. But despite this, the fact remains that the first accusation by the popular voice against the Church was that its principles were directed, not so much against the established traditional observance of the Law, as against the idea of God's presence being confined to the Temple (Acts VI: 14, and VII: 48).

A few years elapsed and the next persecution is represented as directed against the original community by the popular Jewish king, Herod Agrippa I, who executed one leader, James, the brother of John, and imprisoned Peter. Peter was mysteriously delivered, and withdrew from Jerusalem. Apparently, however, the persecution was only temporary; for we find later the Church of Jerusalem able to exercise authority in other cities, and to hold a gathering of believers to debate a very important question. After this Peter and the council of the Twelve Apostles vanish; and after this St. Paul visited Jeru-

salem to be received by the Church, which was evidently unmolested under the rule of a James, who is generally known as "the Lord's brother." Josephus implies that James was held in high respect by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and that his death was considered to be due to the arbitrary violence of the High Priest Ananus. Hegesippus, a Christian writer, says that he was killed by a fuller's club, because when asked by the scribes to expose the error of the Christians, he preached Jesus as the Christ, thus at least confirming the testimony of Josephus that, just before the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, the brother of Jesus was held in high estimation.

We now turn to another aspect of the Acts, the extension of the Gospel to the Gentiles. And here we have an early confirmation of the extent and influence of the Jewish Dispersion. We know from the records of the New Testament that in every city the Jews were powerful and clamorous, that there was at least one and sometimes several synagogues, that the services were largely attended by Gentiles, who were not even proselytes, that the Jews made every effort to increase their

number by proselytising, and manifested great zeal for the Law.

The problem of the Christians of the first age was how this mass of Judaism outside of Palestine was to be leavened by the new preaching of Jesus as the Messiah. The author of Acts strives to throw light on this point. His information is meagre and sometimes disappointing, but the general impression left by him seems to be correct. We can see from what he tells us that the various classes to be approached were (1) men like the original Apostles, who were Palestinian Jews speaking Aramaic and known as Hebrews. (2) Greek-speaking Jews, or Hellenists. (3) Jewish proselytes. (4) Heretical Jews, i.e., the Samaritans. (5) Gentiles in sympathy with Judaism. (6) Gentiles.

(1) Of the first class which formed the original community enough has been said for our present purpose. It is safe to assume that it remained comparatively unmolested in Jerusalem.

(2) The second class has been generally assumed by Christian writers to be composed of men far more liberal in their views than the

"Hebrews." This idea is based partly on Josephus, and partly on the markedly Platonic opinions advanced by Philo. But Philo, though undoubtedly a student of Greek wisdom, was by his own showing an uncompromising observer of the Law, and the strenuous opponent of those Jews who made concessions to the Spirit of heathenism. As far as the testimony of Acts is concerned the Hellenists in the affair of Stephen and in the virulence they showed to St. Paul were at least as intolerant as the natives of Jerusalem, and equally indisposed to accept the new doctrines.

(3) Of the proselytes, Gentiles who had formally accepted Judaism, we know very little. There is a saying of Jesus to the effect that they were the most bitter opponents of the Gospel. The genuineness of this utterance is open to dispute, the truth is confirmed by experience. Converts are as a rule far more zealous for a religion than those who have never known any other. In the first place they have to dissipate the suspicion of lukewarmness by their zeal for their new faith; and in the second, no one breaks his whole connection with the past and abandons

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all his friends and ancestral prejudices without having been impressed with the supreme excellence of the religion he has embraced. He can realise the faults of the faith he has abandoned and the virtues of the new creed more strongly than one who has never known but one form of belief; and, in consequence, the convert is liable to be intolerant.

(4) The Samaritan community was a hostile Jewish sect, to which, according to Josephus, many who were dissatisfied with matters at Jerusalem attached themselves. Notwithstanding their animus against them, the Jews have been compelled to acknowledge that they were scrupulous in fulfilling the Law as they understood it. Very little is really known about the sect, but it appears they held Messianic hopes peculiar to themselves and were susceptible to influences which encouraged a belief in the appearance of a Deliverer. The Christians approached them after the persecution about Stephen and apparently with success. They soon, however, found that there was a rival influence at work in Simon, a magician, one of the most mysterious figures in early Church history. In the Acts he fig-

ures as a wonder worker who was declared by the Samaritans to be the "Power of God called great." He accepted Baptism and in beholding the miracles of Peter and John offered them money if they would give him authority to confer the Holy Spirit by the imposition of his hands. Peter denounced him bitterly; and that is all. But in Christian legend Simon the Magician becomes the rival of Simon Peter the Apostle, and the father of all heresy. He was believed to have embodied his views in a book called the *Great Announcement,* which is quoted by the Church Father Hippolytus. At Rome he met Simon Peter; and the two rivalled one another, to the ultimate discomfiture of Simon the Samaritan. Does this, as has been suggested, mean that there was a Samaritan attempt to rival the proclamation of Jesus as the Christ by the primitive Church? The subject is too obscure to dilate upon here.

(5) In this enumeration of the various people approached by the preaching of Jesus as Messiah, the order of Luke, the author of Acts, is being strictly followed. He places next the conversion of a Gentile centurion,

who was in close touch with Judaism, but not a professing Jew. The Centurion Cornelius, like the one of the Gospel, is frankly a Gentile: only a public profession and full acceptance of Judaism could have made him otherwise. The story as told in Acts X may be a free composition, or it may be an account of what actually happened; its real importance is that it reflects the ideas of the time. Peter is warned by a dream-vision that God commands him to make no scruple about eating ordinary food if He has cleansed it. Cornelius at the hour of prayer is told by an angel to send for Peter to Joppa. He despatches two servants and a soldier who, like himself, worshipped the true God. Peter, prepared by the vision, accompanies them to Cæsarea "nothing doubting." Cornelius receives the Apostle in his house where he has assembled his friends. Peter addresses the company, assuming that all know about the Baptist and the Galilean ministry of Jesus. What he adds is the story of the crucifixion and resurrection. As he speaks the hearers are filled with the Spirit; and Peter, perceiving this, admits them to

Baptism. On his return to Jerusalem, "those of the circumcision" ask him to explain why he had eaten in company with uncircumcised men. He declares he did so by divine command, and his explanation is accepted. It is recognised that God had granted "repentance unto life to the Gentiles" (Acts XI: 18).

Here it is to be noticed that it was not preaching to the Gentiles that was complained of; it was eating with them. Even to Christian Jews, the smallest violation of the ceremonial law was a very grave matter.

(6) Having established the principle that Gentile believers might be admitted to Christian fellowship, Luke goes on to show how the Gospel was diffused among them by members of a community at Antioch, who preached Jesus to the Greeks. The leaders of this society were obviously Jews, who under the influence of the Spirit ordained and sent forth on a special mission three of their number, Barnabas, Saul, and John. Although this is the beginning of the missionary labours of Paul, as Saul is suddenly designated before he and his companions leave Cyprus, the scene of

their first labours, we are rather concerned with the whole group of missionaries, who had a marked success with the Gentiles.

Upon the whole the story in Acts presents the mind of the author, who is endeavouring to explain by means of an historical narrative what he believes to be the stages in the progress of the religion of Jesus, whose Apostles were to be His witnesses. "In Jerusalem and in Judea and in Samaria and to the ends of the world." The obstacle to this progress was not persecution, but the intense loyalty of most believers in the Law and traditions of Judaism. This loyalty gave them favour with the people; and, provided they continued to display it, they might apparently hold what views they pleased about Jesus and His Messiahship. It was only when they broke with the customs of strict Judaism that they became liable to persecution; and this accounts for their unwillingness to do so as well as for the original strength and energy of Judaizing Christianity.

The Jewish Christian was placed in a difficult situation. On the one hand all his inclinations were in the direction of observing

the Law to which he had all his life been accustomed. It might well have seemed to him that nothing would commend the acceptance of Jesus as his Master more than the fact that to serve Him made men stricter and not laxer in fulfilling the Law of God. This was undoubtedly the attitude of the Pharisaic Christians. Jesus had expressly said that He had "not come to destroy, but to fulfil the law and the prophets" (Matt. V: 17). He had paid the half shekel to the Sanctuary (Matt. XVII: 24); He had sent the lepers whom He healed to the priest (Luke XVII: 14); He had observed the feasts (John VII: 10); He had sent His apostles to preach not to Gentiles and to Samaritans but "to the lost sheep of the House of Israel" (Matt. X: 6). Surely His followers in proclaiming Him as the Messiah were under the obligation to act as He had done. As to the Gentiles, there could be no harm in communicating the good news and allowing them to share in Messiah's Kingdom; but at the same time they should be made full proselytes; and Jewish believers should not have intimate dealings with them till they were true Israelites. These argu-

ments had the more force because it was the firm belief of the early Christians that they were the true prophetic remnant which would be saved in the day of the Lord, when Jesus would appear again to judge the world. Such was naturally the position of men reared in an atmosphere of Judaism.

On the other hand the teaching of Jesus had laid all its stress on the disposition of the heart and very little on the value of legal observance. He had required of His disciples a pure heart and a loving disposition rather than an exact discharge of the requirements of ceremonial purity. Why then lay upon Gentiles who showed a good disposition a burthen which would be intolerable to many of them? The Gentiles were receptive of the new doctrines, whereas many Jews showed marked antagonism to them. It is quite credible that there should have been a very rapid diffusion of the Gospel of Jesus when first proclaimed in Jerusalem, especially when the immediate appearance of Messiah in glory was anticipated. But, as has been shown in the death of Stephen, the Hellenistic Jews were hostile to the movement; and when the Gospel was

preached in Gentile cities the willingness of the heathen to receive it provoked the Jews, who had hitherto had much influence over them, to acts of hostility. Accordingly the Christian teachers began to realise that it was the will of God that the Gospel should spread throughout the world; and that if the Gentiles were ready to accept it, they, as well as the Jews, were in truth the chosen people of God. Thus arose the question as to what was to be done with the new converts. Were they to be accepted—and this meant treated as if they were brethren by their Jewish fellow believers, who would necessarily associate, i.e., eat and drink with them on equal terms—or must they be circumcised and compelled to keep the Law in its entirety?

Luke gives a highly dramatic summary of the controversy. It is, however, necessary for us to avoid some points which have been fully treated of by many scholars. At what period was this council of Jerusalem described in Acts XV held? Was Paul present, and did he assent to its decree? Was there a council at all or does Luke, who could hardly under any circumstances have been present, intro-

duce one as a means of describing how a certain form of agreement was arrived at? Here it seems advisable simply to enquire into what the author of Acts desires to tell us in the form in which he relates events, and to take the narrative as it stands. Barnabas and Saul or Paul—for it must be remembered that, at Jerusalem at least, Barnabas was by far the most important personage—have returned to Antioch after a most successful missionary campaign. They assemble the local Church and relate their experiences. They declare that God has done a great work through them, and has opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. Then there arrive delegates from Jerusalem, who say that the new converts ought to be circumcised. Paul and Barnabas oppose this vigorously, and a schism is threatened, so it is agreed that they and others should go to Jerusalem, that the Apostles and Elders there should decide as to what course should be pursued.

Their journey through Phœnicia and Samaria was marked by rejoicing when they announced the conversion of the Gentiles to the brethren, but the Pharisaic Christians

("certain of the sect of the Pharisees") oppose the Apostles and insist on circumcision and the keeping of the Law of Moses.

At Jerusalem the Apostles and Elders assemble to decide the dispute. Peter espouses the cause of Barnabas and Paul. He says that from the first he was chosen by God to preach to the Gentiles and that it is tempting God to lay on their necks a burthen which neither the Jews nor their fathers were able to bear. For Jews and Gentiles the new hope of salvation is by the grace of the Lord Jesus. He is followed by Barnabas and Paul, who show that God has approved their work by signs and marvels.

And now a new character appears. The moderator of this assembly is not Peter the leader of the Twelve, but James, called the "brother of the Lord," though he is never so designated in Acts. If the speech is a free composition, it reveals consummate skill on the part of the author. James sums up the discussion. He quotes the Greek (not the Hebrew) conclusion of Amos. God has promised to choose a people for His name, as is read in the book of the Twelve Prophets,

"After this I will return and will rebuild the Tabernacle of David" (Amos IX: 11 f.), of whose family Jesus and James were members, "that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord" (the Hebrew is that they may possess the remnant of Edom) "and all the nations upon whom my name is called." He goes on to lay down his decision, "Therefore my verdict is not to trouble those of the Gentiles who are turning to God, but to charge them to keep from pollution of idols and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses from of old has those who preach him in every city, seeing that he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath day" (Acts XV: 19-21). This decision was embodied in a letter which was sent to Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.

It was a compromise: and, like most, if not all, other compromises, was interpreted variously, and failed to produce a final settlement. If Paul was a consenting party to it, he certainly ignored it in his later years. About this time he and Peter had a serious dispute as to the permissibility of eating with the Gentiles and Barnabas appears to have taken the side

of Peter. James continued in Jerusalem the representative of a community of men who observed the Law and accepted Jesus. He was held in the highest honour by the Jews; but he was the head of a party doomed to disappear. The quarrel between the Judaising Christians and those in favour of a liberal policy towards the Gentiles went on with unabated vigour as is seen in the career of Paul, but the Christians of Jerusalem appear to have remained indifferent to this movement, and the Jewish war and the fall of the city drove them ultimately to Pella. But what we have to observe here is that the decision of the so-called council of Jerusalem is a turning point in the story of the relations between Christianity and Judaism because it allowed the Church to embark on a wider policy than had previously been contemplated. The decree made it possible to accept the Gentiles, as partaking in the Messianic hopes of the followers of Jesus, that is of the remnant, which was to be saved at His second coming. The meaning of the decree has been a fruitful cause of discussion among Christian scholars, and has given them an opportunity for an endless

exercise of ingenuity and display of learning, but its object is fairly plain. It insisted that Gentile Christianity should not be a compromise with idolatry, *i.e.,* no heathen could be admitted if he, like the ancient Cutheans whom Esarhaddon placed in Palestine, "served the Lord and worshipped graven images." At the same time the convert must observe the fundamentals of morality and not regard fornication a venial offence, as most of the Gentile world was inclined to do. Lastly he must not offend the natural prejudices of his Jewish brethren by eating meat with the blood in it—a food law, but much milder than that which Jewish tradition insisted upon. On this condition he could be a member of the congregation (*ecclesia*) of the new Israel.

With this the first division of Acts comes to an end, the rest of the book being devoted to the labours of Paul, the great missionary to the Gentiles.

It remains for us to see how far we have advanced in our discussion of the separation of the Christian community from the Jewish. The principles taught by Jesus seem hardly to have been in dispute. What the Apostles

are said to have preached is that His Resurrection proved His Messiahship. This was a cause of offence to the ruling priestly aristocracy on grounds purely political; the people seem to have received the message with some approval. The impression left by a candid perusal of Acts is that the Judaism of the time was not intolerant of opinions. The real battle was the question of observing the Law: the least weakening on this point aroused a storm of indignation, as it had done during the ministry of Jesus. It appealed to the pious Israelite, who, so far from finding the Law a burthen, felt its observance to be a delight, and also to the patriotic Jew, who considered that at least it kept alive the feeling of nationality, and separated him effectually from the heathen. The spirit infused by Jesus was in its essence opposed to exclusive nationalism, and led to the establishment of a more universal form of religion. Without premeditation on their part the Christians turned to evangelise the heathen.

Chapter IV

PAUL AS A JEWISH TEACHER

No mention has yet been made, except casually, of one who is credited with being the chiefest factor in bringing about the final rupture between the Church and the Synagogue. St. Paul is next to Christ the greatest personality in the history of Christianity, and in the minds of some he overshadows even Jesus Himself. The Jews to this day, if they abandon their ancient prejudice against Jesus and recognise in Him a great teacher, who despite all they have suffered in His name, is an honour to their race, regard Paul as their worst enemy; there are also Christians who consider that Paul's theological system and scheme of salvation has proved the great obstacle to mankind's recognising the true meaning of the message of their Master. There are others, who whilst accepting all Paul says of the supreme position of Jesus, have really professed a religion which is entirely Pauline, and

have dwelt on Jesus, as Paul does, almost exclusively in His capacity of a divine Saviour. They have even selected for special attention the sayings of Jesus which are in accordance with the doctrine of Paul, making Jesus God, and Paul His prophet. Many original Christian thinkers have made the system of Paul the basis of their own special theories. Thus Marcion, in the second century, turned to him as his authority for believing that the God of the Old Testament was the God of Righteousness, in contrast with the God of Love in the New. St. Augustine in the fifth century grounded his doctrine of divine election and grace on the Apostle, and Luther in the sixteenth took his battle cry of "Salvation by Faith" against the corrupted mediæval doctrine of good works.

Admitting all this, the present thesis is that in New Testament times there were influences fully as potent as that of Paul at work; though we have little information concerning them, whereas we have a sketch of his career in Acts, supplemented by his letters, some of which are unquestionably genuine. But many so-called innovations in the original Gospel

ascribed to St. Paul were really part of primitive Christianity. This is especially true of the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, which Paul is, by some, credited with having originated.

We have two pictures of St. Paul; one we can gather from his own letters, the other is that in Acts. They differ on some material points; and the question has been raised whether the author of Acts was really a man who was, as Luke is supposed to have been, a constant companion of the Apostle in his later days. For this reason it is best to consider the Paul as he presents himself to us in his letters, which were evidently written with no other purpose than that of solving immediate difficulties, raised by the needs, either of Christian communities, or of individuals.

Writing to the Church at Philippi, to people to whom he was peculiarly attached, Paul thus described himself: "circumcised on the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrew parents, as to the Law a Pharisee, so zealous for it that he was a persecutor of the Church,

without reproach as to the way he fulfilled the Law." "But," he adds, "the very things I prided myself upon I cheerfully resigned for the sake of Christ" (Phil. III: 4-8). In that part of the Acts which is almost certainly the work of a companion of St. Paul, the Apostle says that he was a citizen of Tarsus, and had been educated at the feet of Gamaliel. He was undoubtedly a Roman citizen.

Paul is careful to insist that he maintained himself by manual labour, and refused to take any money from his converts. Rather than do this he worked with his own hands. A passage in Acts suggests that he was a tent-maker (*Skênopoios,* a very obscure word) (Acts XVIII: 3). It is, however, I think a mistake to say that he was a simple artisan. From scattered notices it is probable that he was a man of considerable importance, and belonged to the educated, wealthy, and privileged class.

But his exterior circumstances are unimportant as compared with his inner experiences. It is questionable whether his account of his condition of mind is natural to a Jew; but his experiences have been frequent among those

Christians who have undergone the religious change known as conversion. Here are Paul's own words:

> "We know that the Law is good, but I am only of flesh, a slave of sin. . . . For I do not do what I wish, but what I hate. And if I do what I abhor I agree that the law is good. Thus it is not really I who work, but the sin which dwells in my flesh. . . . For in my heart I agree with the law; but I perceive an alien law in me which makes constant war with the law my mind approves of, and I am taken prisoner by the sinful law in my body. Miserable man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. VII: 12, 14-24.)

This is a totally different attitude from that attributed to Peter at the Council of Jerusalem. The Law is not "a burthen which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" (Acts XV: 10). It is not tiresome to fulfil it, but impossible. It is good, it is divine; and if a man kept it he would be righteous before God. But he cannot do so: Paul tried with

all his might and failed, and was reduced to the despairing cry, "Who shall deliver me?"

It would be a real assistance to scholars if a Jew would study St. Paul, not dogmatically, but psychologically. Christians judge him from their standpoint, but do not understand the workings of the Jewish religious mind. They know what conversion is because it is a common experience. A man is possessed by an overmastering spiritual impulse which alters the whole course of his life. In ancient days we have John Chrysostom and Augustine, who relate this remarkable change in themselves. In more recent days there is Luther. Modern religious literature is full of examples. But is this dissatisfaction with the inner self, this feeling that there is a secret by which peace with God may be found, such as Paul describes, characteristic of Judaism? At any rate the character of Paul, whose personality has exercised such enormous influence, is well worth study by men of his own race. What we want to know is not so much the effect of Paul on others, for we have a good idea of this, but what sort of man he actually was.

Paul had a remarkable experience which, like the visions of Isaiah and Jeremiah, changed his life. I doubt if it really altered his character. He was a zealot for the Law before, and a zealot for Christ after his conversion. This is natural. When he was a Pharisee he saw that the teaching of Christ among the Hellenists would ultimately ruin the Law as his sect interpreted it. When he became a Christian he carried his original conception to a different logical conclusion. If the Law, as accepted by orthodox Jews, was true, the followers of Jesus ought to be suppressed. If their teaching was true, the legalists of the day must be relentlessly opposed. To Paul, Christianity was not an adaptation of first-century Judaism: it was a new religion.

At the same time Paul was a Jew, and a Jew he remained to the last. St. John Chrysostom has a very fine panegyric on his love for his people. In his book *On the Priesthood* he deals with the subject of preaching, and speaks of those who assert that sermons need no preparation but ought to come from the heart rather than from the head. Such as these say that Paul should be the

example. This gives the writer his opportunity; and he dilates on the great intellectual gifts of the Apostle, and the comprehensiveness of his knowledge of spiritual things. But the most wonderful thing about this marvellous man was, neither his eloquence, nor his miracles, but the spirit he displayed when he wrote to the Romans that his heart's desire for Israel was that they should be saved, and that he would gladly be "accursed" if he could save his brethren (Rom. IX: 3). Paul finds it hard to understand how Israel could fail to accept the Gospel; and accounts for it, partly by recollecting that the prophets had always foretold that a remnant only should be saved, and partly by the fact that in Scripture God had chosen and rejected men even before they were born—witness His preference of Jacob to Esau. But the Jews have many advantages—they are the chosen nation, they were entrusted with the oracles of God, theirs is the adoption and the promises. It is true they have been rebellious and are rejected, but this doubtless has been part of God's plan in order that the Gentiles might come within the covenant. When the Gentiles have en-

tered in the Jews will repent "and then shall all Israel be saved." As to the Gentiles, they must not boast or exult over the Jews. They, by a strange metaphor, are like a wild olive grafted onto a sweet olive tree and become partakers of its qualities. But let them beware; God spared not the natural branches, and will assuredly not spare those who by special favour have been grafted in. In a word the Apostle of the Gentiles was proud of his membership of the Jewish race, and his chief sorrow was the rejection of his own brethren (Rom. XI: 13-20).

There was one point on which every religious Jew in the first century was agreed; and of this the more prudent rulers of the nation saw the absolute necessity. The dangerous fanaticism of the people must be restrained. This was felt by Jesus, the Pharisees, and the Priesthood at Jerusalem, and by none more strongly than Paul. Josephus, an entirely worldly man, was of the same opinion. Into the "melting pot" of the Roman Republic the Jews had obstinately refused to be cast; and they remained a peculiar people. This was inevitable; and none of their

religious leaders would have had it otherwise. But the Jew was at this time a fighter, and a formidable one, not only because of his intense fanaticism, but because he was consumed with a desire for world domination which he conceived had been foretold by the prophets. He felt himself, moreover, a member of a nation, which had a real corporate existence apart from the rest of the Empire. With intercommunication of distant countries brought to a state of perfection the world had not hitherto known, the organisation of Judaism was elaborate and efficient. Nor could the Roman law interfere. The Jews had clearly recognised rights, their religion was national, and as such protected. Their Sabbath rest was sanctioned, even in the Roman army. Nevertheless the whole nation was in a state of ferment. Its progress in wealth and numbers enforced by vigorous proselytism was alarming. In every great city the Jews were a turbulent and discontented faction, very unpopular with the Hellenist population. Palestine was a hotbed of anti-Roman sedition. The great war of A.D. 66-70 was becoming inevitable.

Paul was fully aware of the danger. He

urges obedience to the civil power. The Emperor and his officers are of God's appointment. To resist them is to resist the ordinance of God (Rom. XIII: 1). Perhaps he, like others, regarded the power of Rome as the great hindrance to a period of world disaster (see II Thess. II: 7). At the same time he believed in a speedy coming of Jesus as the Christ in glory and the consummation of the age.

Here we have a clue to the character of this remarkable man. On the one hand he was a visionary, subject to ecstasies, trances, spiritual influences of every description. He prophesied, received direct communications from Jesus, was caught up into the Third Heaven, and heard things which he felt were too sacred to be disclosed. He tells the Corinthians that he "spoke with tongues" more than they all (I Cor. XIV: 18). His mind was at times occupied with thoughts of angels, demons, and heavenly hierarchies.

On the other hand Paul possessed many qualities of a leader of men, sound judgment, the power of taking a broad view of a subject, a charm and courtesy which must have

endeared him to his friends, presence of mind in difficult situations, ability to organise new communities, a keen strategical eye for conducting extensive missionary campaigns. In dealing with men he was able to adapt himself to their different requirements, and in argument he was able to bring forward reasons calculated to convince, if not the men of our day, at least those of his own. This can be substantiated from Paul's brief letters, and the last chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, which are, almost certainly, the work of a friend and companion who knew him well.

If one takes the First Epistle to the Corinthians, where Paul deals with the disputes and difficulties of that early Christian community, it will be hard to deny the sanity of Paul's judgments. There is the food question, always a burning one in a community half Gentile and half Jewish. In his heart the Apostle regarded it as a matter of indifference. Provided a man believed in the power of Christ, was possessed by the Spirit, and manifested the gift in his character, Paul thought it entirely immaterial what he ate. A lesser man would have said so. But Paul

recognised that, if unimportant to him, it was not so to the Corinthians. It endangered the stability of a Church already rent by factions. The Jewish Christians were accusing the Gentile believers, not merely of violating the Law, but of actual idolatry, because the meat they ate might be sacrificial, *i.e.,* have been offered to the gods. Some were so scrupulous that they refused to eat meat at all, others treated the Jewish objectors with contempt. Apparently the same difficulty existed later in the Roman Church (I Cor. VIII: 1 f.; Rom. XIV: 13 f.).

Paul's manner of dealing with the question is that, though these scruples are to him almost ridiculous, the treatment of them involves a principle which applies to all ages and conditions of life, namely, that in all our actions we should be guided by regard for the feelings of those about us. We ought not to be proud of our enlightenment and freedom from prejudice so as to hurt those who do not share in our ideas. Those who are, as he describes them, "weak in faith" are not to be disregarded. Intellectual arrogance is hateful, because it is essentially unloving. "I will eat no flesh so

long as the world endures, rather than cause my brother to stumble" is the conclusion at which he arrives (I Cor. VIII: 13).

The politeness of St. Paul is seldom spoken of, yet it is very noticeable. One little personal letter of his has survived. There is nothing theological about it, it is merely a letter of recommendation to a friend named Philemon, asking him to take back a runaway servant named Onesimus. The whole letter is worth reading; and Paul's request is comprised in thirteen brief verses. Paul, as a prisoner in Rome, found Onesimus and converted him to Christ, impressed on him that he had wronged his master. Onesimus then returned to servitude with this letter to Philemon. Paul hints not only that Onesimus should be pardoned but have his freedom. Very delicately he insinuates that Philemon owes something for having learned the truth from Paul. He offers to pay any loss Onesimus has caused; and all is done so gracefully, so modestly, that the letter is a model of the finest courtesy of antiquity. One finds the same characteristics in Acts. Look at the dignified politeness with which Paul treats Felix,

the Procurator, and Agrippa, the King. His letters are full of little touches of consideration for others. Wherever we meet him he figures as a high-bred gentleman.

His presence of mind is naturally a subject on which the Apostle does not speak. One can judge of it by the testimony of his companion in the "We-Section" of the Acts of the Apostle. Read of how he comported himself after he had been rescued by the Roman soldiers from a mob in the Temple Courts ready to tear him in pieces, or how he acted in the shipwreck. His calmness and resourcefulness must impress any reader.

As to his missionary plans it is enough to glance at the map whilst reading Acts and see how he selected each place in which he remained long to preach with a view to its being the best centre to disseminate his views widely. His letters are a testimony to the versatility of his mind, and justify his assertion that he could be a Jew to the Jews, a Greek to the Greeks, all things to all men that he might gain some.

If one considers Paul's attitude to the Gentiles, he appears as their friend and champion;

but he allows himself to indulge in no delusions concerning them. Their upbringing had made them morally weaker than those trained under the stern discipline of the Mosaic law and rabbinical tradition, and Paul does not fail to realise this.

The religion which Paul was disseminating was threefold. It was a rule of life, supported by the Jewish belief in one God, with the novel element of the acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah or Christ and the means of obtaining salvation. As to the first, the Gentiles were invited to accept the moral teaching of the Law and the Prophets *minus* the obligation to observe the ritual and social rules. To make them do this was no easy task. Accustomed as they had been for generations to a lax moral code, it was much easier for them to be ritually and emotionally religious than consistently pure in life. The New Testament abounds in warnings against falling back into heathen modes of life. Paul's idea was to insist on the Gentiles leading pure lives as the first result of accepting the Gospel; and his tone towards them is that of one, accustomed to an entirely different standard to theirs. It was difficult

for him to imagine how those who had been baptised into Christ could fall back into the abominations of the Gentiles; but he never shirks the unpleasant fact that they did so.

As a moralist he was a Jew disciplining Gentiles; and one may well enquire how it was that he did not, like the Jewish Christian Rabbis, declare that to be a member of God's chosen remnant, who looked for deliverance by Jesus, and accepted Him as the Messiah of Israel, a man must be circumcised and become a Jew under the Law. A reason may be suggested, which Paul does not give in so many words, though he appears to imply it. The hardest thing to make a Gentile convert do was to live in accordance with the moral law, and there was a dangerous alternative. The tendency of most religions of the day was to consider that the great desideratum was correct ritual and ceremonial purity. Provided the gods were served, with the prescribed ceremonies exactly performed, they had every reason to be satisfied. Provided a man was purified by an absolutely correct ritual observance, he obtained all the benefits of a Mystery Religion. It was the same, in a less

degree, in the Judaism of the age. It cannot be denied that many Christians have fallen into the same error. But the religion taught by Jesus insisted so strenuously on purity of heart, that many of His followers had a real distrust of all Jewish ceremonial; and Paul may very well have feared that by allowing his Gentile converts to become Jewish legal precisians he might encourage them to become externally Israelite Christians, but at heart no better than they had been as heathen. Hence he warns them to beware of judging one another in respect of meat and drink or of a new moon or Sabbath; and he tells the Galatians that they observe days and months and years, and by so doing he fears that his labour among them has proved fruitless. Observe that he never dissuades Jews from practising their ritual or customs. He goes himself to Jerusalem to observe the feasts. The Passover is the more sacred to him because Christ suffered at that season. All he insists on is that when a Gentile accepts the Gospel, he ought not to be circumcised and enter the Jewish community; for "every man who accepts circumcision is a debtor to keep the whole law" (Gal. V: 3).

From this we may infer that Paul himself continued to live as a Jew.

The Christian Gnostic Marcion, who, whether he succeeded or not, was the pioneer in the field of Pauline interpretation, held that the Apostle's real meaning was that the God of Israel was an inflexibly just deity of limited power and intelligence, and that the God of Jesus and of Paul was a God of Love. It is impossible to read such a meaning into their teaching. The God of both was the Holy One of the Law and the Prophets. The law and commandment which He had given were, to use Paul's words, "Holy and just and good" (Rom. VII: 12). The only imperfection was its inefficacy; and this was due to the weakness of human nature. If a man could keep the Law he would merit the favour of God. But he could not: the only hope of Salvation lay in accepting Christ as Lord, because by His death He had redeemed men from the curse of the Law (Gal. III: 13).

This leads to a consideration of Paul's doctrine of Jesus, which is both practical and mystical. It must not be forgotten that Paul's whole thought was occupied by the experience

of his conversion. He was an apostle because he "had seen the Lord Jesus." He believed that he was in constant communication with Him. It is remarkable that Paul makes hardly a single allusion to the ministry, teaching, or even the character of Jesus. We must not lay too much stress on this; for after all we possess only a few brief letters—not treatises, but letters called forth by peculiar circumstances. Still from them we may gather that the death of Christ on the cross had an absorbing interest for Paul. It was a sin-offering of an innocent victim for the sake of the world. It was a death in which all who put their faith in Christ died with Him that they might rise to a new and better life. Paul felt that he had been "crucified with Christ" and that he "lived no more but Christ lived in him." He uses the death of Christ as an argument to show that all who are His have died to the Law and are free from the curse which hangs over those who have transgressed against it. The death and resurrection of Christ are the keynotes of His Gospel; our old nature ("man" he calls it) is dead, and a new man has been created in us. All thus

renewed are members of the true Israel, "the Israel of God" (Gal. VI: 16).

Next arises the question, What did St. Paul teach as to the divinity of Christ? Is he responsible for turning a simple, undogmatic religion, such as Jesus is believed to have taught, into a highly technical, philosophic system, as is embodied in the Christian creeds of the fourth and fifth centuries? St. Paul cared nothing for theology or speculation about the nature of God, nor did Jesus, nor the prophets of Israel before Him. We must turn from Israel to Greece if we want theology.

To the Hellenic race the gods were the forces of nature personified, and the object of religion was to pacify them. They were non-moral till philosophy came to attempt to moralise them. There was a tendency to unify the Divine, which led to a highly refined conception of the Supreme God as something which could only be defined by negations. He became less and less personal, and, if God is one, he is best defined as Ultimate Reality. For the great Semitic religions God, even, if at first conceived as a national deity, becomes

the Supreme Judge of the world, and is intensely personal, differing from man in being perfectly righteous in all His ways. This is the God of the great prophets, of Jesus, and of Paul. In their teaching they took Him for granted, and assumed that their disciples did the same. It may be fair to say that in the religion of Israel the chief quality insisted on was His inflexible justice; in Jesus His love for His creatures; and in Paul His desire to gather all nations into a new Israel and to save them by Christ. This does not mean that the God of the Prophets was not loving, the God of Jesus not just, or the God of either not desirous to save the world. Only different aspects of His nature are emphasised. But whether in Judaism, Christianity in its Hebrew aspect, or in Mohammedanism, belief in God is a practical matter and not a philosophical theory.

It was the same with the early belief in Jesus. It was eminently practical and with no one more so than St. Paul. The Jesus who appeared to Paul on his way to Damascus became his Master or his Lord. He felt that by failing to fulfil the Law he had incurred

the displeasure of God and that through Jesus, the Christ, he had become reconciled to Him. Jesus had paid the debt to God's justice and reconciled man to God. In his later Epistles Paul declares Jesus to be the first born of all creation, above all the powers of heaven; but it must be remembered that in the world of his day the belief in a hierarchy of spirits, good and evil, was firmly rooted in mankind, and added materially to the terror of the unseen. The assurance that Jesus was above all these mysterious celestial, terrestrial, and infernal unseen authorities and powers brought infinite comfort to distressed minds, possibly even to that of a man as intellectually and spiritually gifted as the Apostle. The world to-day, Christian as well as Jewish, finds it difficult to follow Paul's train of thought; but all must see the very practical element in his acceptation of Jesus as the Mediator between God and man (Col. I: 15 ff.; Eph. I: 21 ff.).

Is this an original contribution on the part of Paul to religious thought? Was it he alone who invented Gentile anti-legalistic Christianity? Were the scholars of Tübingen right in affirming that there were two forms of Chris-

tianity, a Petrine with a Jewish tendency, and a Pauline entirely Gentile, and that Paul's party gained the day through the mediating tendency of the Author of Acts?

To take but one aspect of this vast question, Was Paul the inventor of a sacramental Christianity which appealed to the Gentiles, but would have been almost incomprehensible to Jews? There is nothing quite analogous to Christian Baptism or to the Eucharist in the Old Testament. True there are ceremonial washings, and the idea of cleansing waters is familiar. But the Christian doctrine of Baptism is, not merely that it is an imitation accompanied by purificatory rites, but that every person who sincerely submits to it is freed from all sin and is assured of eternal life. The Lord's Supper is more than a commemorative feast or a solemn meal, like that on the eve of the Sabbath; it is believed that those who partake of it really participate in the human but glorified Body and Blood of the Saviour, and thus are brought into the closest possible union with Him.

But as this sacramental conception has its parallel in the heathen cults and mystery re-

ligions of the time, it is by some assumed that Paul converted the Christian practice of baptising converts, and of celebrating the supper which the Lord had instituted, into mysteries or sacraments. This is hardly borne out by the language of the Apostle. In writing to Corinth, to a church divided by factions, many of which were bitterly opposed to him, he always assumes that he is speaking of things, and even of doctrines on which all Christians practically agreed.

Perhaps the powerful effects of Paul's writings were felt, not very immediately, but many generations and even centuries later; and maybe he was less of an innovator than is often assumed. Though constantly contending against the Judaizing Christians, his mind was characteristically Jewish.

Chapter V

JOSEPHUS AND PAUL COMPARED

It would be hard to find two Jews more dissimilar than St. Paul and his younger contemporary, the historian Flavius Josephus. Paul was essentially an idealist, a man who gloried in his tribulations, one who, whatever views we may hold of the correctness of his convictions, sacrificed everything for them. The Jews not unreasonably dislike him; but at the same time they must admit that he deserves the credit of disinterestedness. Josephus, on the contrary, was characterised by great personal vanity, cared for his own safety and material comfort, and was prepared at any moment to sacrifice his countrymen to save himself.

Yet the parallel between the two men is as striking as the contrast. Both gloried in their unblemished descent; but it is characteristic that Paul tells the Philippians that he was a Hebrew born of Hebrew parents, and Jo-

sephus informs the world that he had royal blood in his veins. Both were Pharisees, both made early progress in their knowledge of the Law, both were sent on missions by the priesthood of Jerusalem, one to Damascus, the other to Rome, both were men of great versatility, able to impress Roman officials, both were conscious of the unique importance of the religion of Israel, both were brought into contact with Agrippa II, both probably died in Rome, both wrote in Greek, possibly not the native language of either, finally both incurred the hatred of their countrymen who did all in their power to blacken their characters. It was the Christian Church which preserved the writings of Josephus. But for that, he would have been forgotten. It is not to be wondered at that the Christian Fathers made use of him; for his account of the calamities of the Jews which culminated in the destruction of the Temple, furnished an argument for their rejection by God. Josephus is even supposed to have been a Christian; and that very extraordinary man, William Whiston, a mathematical professor in Cambridge, affirmed positively that he was an Ebionite. An ac-

count of the genius and eccentricities of Whiston, who was deprived of his professorship for unorthodox opinions in 1709, would be entertaining; but it is here sufficient to quote a note of his in his translation of the Works of Josephus. It is in the *Life*—Josephus has been describing the great uprightness of his rule in Palestine and adds, "And on this account, it is God who is never unacquainted with those who do as they ought to do, delivered me still out of the hands of these mine enemies, and afterwards preserved me when I fell into those dangers which I shall relate hereafter." On this Whiston comments.

> "Our Josephus shows both here and everywhere, that he was a most religious person, and one that had a deep sense of God and his providence upon his mind, and ascribed all his wonderful and numerous escapes and preservations, in times of danger, to God blessing him, and this on account of his acts of piety, justice, and humanity toward the Jews, his brethren.

In his *Life* from which the quotation is taken, Josephus has been playing a thor-

oughly double game throughout, betraying both his country and the Romans; and when he surrendered to Vespasian at Jotapata he did so by deluding his faithful followers to slay one another, and escaped himself to the Roman camp.

In order fully to understand Dr. Whiston's appreciation of the piety of Josephus, it may be well to take a brief survey of his long and interesting career. This will be followed by an account of his literary labours, and then one can estimate his importance to our proper subject which is the parting of Christianity from Judaism.

He tells us that he was a member of the first of the twenty-four priestly courses. "I am of the chief family of that first course also; nay rather, by my mother I am of the royal blood." He then gives his pedigree. At the age of fourteen he says that his learning was such, that he was consulted by the leading rabbis and priests. At the age of sixteen he made trial of all the sects: Essenes, Sadducees, and Pharisees, and spent three years with an ascetic named Banus, who lived a solitary life eating only food which grew of itself, and

using frequent ablutions of cold water to preserve his purity. At the age of eighteen he attached himself to the Pharisees. At twenty-six he was sent to Rome on a diplomatic mission to procure the liberation of some priests. He was shipwrecked in the Adriatic and was one of the few survivors who reached land. At Rome he made friends with a countryman named Aliturus, a famous actor who stood well with Poppæa, the wife of Nero; and with his assistance he procured the object of his journey. This is all he tells us in his *Life;* but from hints elsewhere, it is pretty certain that he made valuable friends who stood him in good stead in later days.

When he came back to Jerusalem, Josephus found the war with the Romans imminent, and did his utmost to dissuade his countrymen from provoking it. Like the Herod family he saw the utter madness of entering into so unequal a contest, as he knew the power and resources of Rome as no untravelled Jew could possibly have done.

We are able to check Josephus' statements in the *Life* by his *History of the Jewish Wars,* written many years before with a very

different object. When he published the *Wars* Vespasian and Titus were his patrons and his object was to magnify their exploits in subduing the Jews. To do so it was necessary to extol the valour of the nation and his own personal courage in particular. Accordingly he says that the Jews sent him to Galilee as commander of the army, and he made all possible use of the time before the enemy arrived by disciplining sixty thousand men in the Roman manner. He was opposed by many enemies and notably by a certain John, who posed as a patriot but was really a fraudulent speculator. When Vespasian arrived Josephus garrisoned a little place named Jotapata, the siege of which delayed the Roman army for months, owing to the desperate courage of the troops and the prudence of their leader. At last, however, the city was in the hands of the besiegers, but for forty valiant men who had retired to a cave and could not be forced to yield. But their cause was hopeless: so they vowed that they would all die rather than surrender. Josephus approved their resolution and directed it saying that he would arrange that lots were cast which

should slay the other. Fortune, he would have called it "the Divine," was on his side and he was left with one companion amid thirty-eight corpses. Unable to bear the strain, the two escaped to the Romans and surrendered. Vespasian and Titus, his son, were most anxious to see Josephus, who happened to have friends in the Roman army. When brought before the general the captive requested a private interview and told him that a Jewish general never surrendered but always died fighting and that he had not done so because, being of noble priestly stock, he had the gift of prophecy. He therefore begged Vespasian to keep him and not to send him to Nero because he had received a Divine intimation that Vespasian would succeed Nero as emperor.

Vespasian and Titus had subsequently a great regard for this valiant and gifted, if unpatriotic Jew. He became a client of their family and took their name of Flavius. He was given Roman citizenship. He was with Titus during the entire siege of Jerusalem. He was employed to induce the Jews to surrender and accept the terms of Titus. He

exerted all his eloquence to persuade the besieged but in vain. The Jews railed at him as a traitor, and he was only rescued from them with difficulty. He saw the city and Temple destroyed. He tells us that he saw two of his personal friends hanging on crosses; and at his intercession they were taken down. One recovered and the other died. In the company of Titus he attended the games in celebration of his victory, and saw Jews massacred by hundreds in the arena. Then he went to Rome and spent the rest of his life in apartments assigned to him in Cæsar's palace. His particular friend was King Herod Agrippa II who, though a devout Jew, was a consistent friend of the Romans, and had always seen the madness of the rebellion. Josephus was in fact the court historian, commissioned to write the story of the Jewish war. He says he had done so in Aramaic for the Jews in the East, now he set himself to master the Greek language in order to accomplish his task of instructing the Roman world. He completed his *Wars* about A.D. 80.

Domitian succeeded Titus and as the Jews were being abused as an upstart and infamous

race, Josephus undertook the patriotic task of dissipating the aspersions cast upon them. He devoted himself to the study of the *Antiquities* of his people in order to show that their ancestry was more respectable than that of any other nation. Beginning with the Creation he traces their history in twenty books to the outbreak of the rebellion against Rome. This he finished about A.D. 90.

But his Jewish detractors were not idle. A writer called Justus of Tiberias, whose work has been lost, gave an account of affairs in Galilee to the discredit of Josephus probably enlarging upon his anti-Roman activities in the days of Vespasian. Domitian was now emperor, and his suspicious temper rendered such an accusation especially dangerous. So Josephus wrote his so-called *Life,* the opening of which gives promise of a regular biography, but the rest is devoted to an account of what he did in Galilee when in command of the Jews. In the *Wars* he represents himself as a defeated patriot spared by the clemency of Vespasian; but in the *Life* he says that he was always inclined to help the Romans, and in fact was their friend, even when

he represented the authorities at Jerusalem. He was not even in high command, but had been sent to collect the tithes, and had not the confidence of his countrymen. The book ends with a notice of the privileges he enjoyed and his intimacy with Agrippa II, who helped him with his history. Apparently he kept the favour of Domitian. This certainly does not give us a high regard for Josephus as a patriot or an honest man; but more of this hereafter. His last appearance is a defence of the Jews which is more to his credit.

Their great literary enemy was named Apion, who had previously caused an anti-Semitic agitation by his writings, against which both the *Antiquities* and the two books *Against Apion* were a reply. Apion's attack was based on the current calumnies about the origin of the Jews, and by raising a cry that has been repeated in every age that their religion was an abominable one, which encouraged the practice of human sacrifice. We will take the last charge, which is found in the second book, first. It is curious how persistently and with what fatal effects this charge has been made. It began in the days of An-

tiochus Epiphanes, B.C. 168, when he desecrated the Temple; and it was alleged, discovered a Greek who was kept there in order that he might be sacrificed. It was passed on to the Christians, who were believed in their midnight orgies to kill an infant and drink his blood. It reappeared in the middle ages, where in many towns child saints were reverenced as martyrs to Jewish superstition at the time of the Passover. It has been renewed in our own day in Eastern Europe, and the testimony of more than one eminent scholar was quoted by Russian lawyers to prove that the Jewish religion had once sanctioned human offerings. It is a dreadful example of the perversity of human credulity and a warning against that foolish attitude of mind that because a preposterous absurdity is often repeated "there must be something in it." At any rate it was sufficiently formidable in the first century to merit a refutation; and it is strange that the argument of Josephus is in the main this: it is not credible because no dead body was permitted in the Temple at Jerusalem.

The rest of Apion's anti-Judaism, his fal-

sification of the history of Israel, is replied to in the first book. But before discussing it and the *Antiquities* I should like to say a few words on the extraordinary ignorance about the Jews in ancient times. There seemed to be no general interest in this extraordinary people outside their own community from the Captivity and Return to the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes—Rabbinical tradition, to judge by the *Pirqe Aboth,* is ominously silent. There is the mysterious figure of Simon the Just. Josephus tells us some not very creditable stories about the sons of Tobias. Legend records the interest Ptolemy Philadelphus took in the Jews. Then the Mond-Cecil papyri reveal that between B.C. 470-405 there was an influential settlement in Egypt, favoured by the Persians, with a temple of their own, and names almost identical with those found in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Herodotus in the same century, who was an insatiably curious traveller, says nothing about the Jews. In the next century we should never have heard of Alexander the Great's intercourse with them but for Josephus. It is not till the first century before

the Christian era that we learn from Cicero's speech in defence of Flaccus that the Temple tax was regularly collected, and that the Jewish community in Rome had no little interest with the Senate. Still there was hardly any notice taken of their peculiar religion to judge by the literature which has come down to us. Only a few scurrilous stories of their origin were known to such a writer as Tacitus. The average Jew was despised as a pedlar or ridiculed for his credulity, or believed to possess magical powers, denied to some who considered they themselves belonged to a superior race.

It was Josephus who undertook the task of making the story of his nation appeal to the civilised world. For this reason his *Antiquities* are far more interesting than valuable to us as an exposition of the Bible history, which he retold for the benefit of the Gentile world, if not in scholarly Greek, at least in such a way as would appeal to Gentiles. The first books are in fact the earliest Scripture history. To his *Apion* we owe most of our information of what was known of the Jews in heathen literature. I do not think Jo-

sephus was at heart a religious man, and he was certainly not a high-minded patriot. But he fully deserves the credit of doing all that pen can accomplish to make the outside world see that there was much to admire in history of Judaism, and to arouse interest in the Chosen People. He in some ways resembles Benjamin Disraeli, the English Prime Minister, who, without practising his ancestral religion, never forgot he was a Jew and wrote expressing a belief in the high destiny of his race. The interest in Josephus for our present purpose lies in the fact that he represents a different phase of a great movement in Judaism, one result of which was Christianity. There were in the first century two types of Jews—those who were either religiously or politically irreconcilably opposed to the entire Gentile World; and those who desired to make some terms with it either in one aspect or the other. The enemies of Josephus were the Jewish zealots, who refused to acknowledge the rule of the Gentiles as represented by the Roman Empire, as those opponents of St. Paul, who were as firmly opposed to ad-

mitting the uncircumcised within the covenant.

To understand Josephus as a Jew and his attitude to the world in which he lived as well as the religion which he professed, it is desirable to try to comprehend what the Roman Empire actually was. And first it is necessary to dismiss any preconceived ideas we may have of an Empire. The words *imperium Romanum* meant the sway which the Romans exercised. It had nothing to do with the Emperor. That is to say it is quite incorrect to say that before Augustus it was a republic and after him an empire. Emperor, *Imperator, Induperator,* was a title by which the soldiers saluted a General after a victory. Augustus and his successors were in theory, at least, and declared themselves to be, the first citizens of the Republic, and chiefs, *Principes,* of the Senate. The Greeks called them *basileis* or kings; but no Roman ever styled them *reges.* The Empire further was not like the so-called ancient empires of Assyria, Babylon, Persia or that of Alexander the Great, the result of a policy of conquest or expansion. Rome was a city state which had

expanded *malgre lui.* It had begun as a federation of tribes; it became a federation of Italian nations. After the victory over Carthage, Rome became the leading power in the world; but even then had no great desire for acquisition of territory. Her object was to federate rather than to subdue, to make nations her allies (*socii populi Romani*) rather than her subjects. The East was full of city states, petty kingdoms, sacred territories ruled by their priests—for Jerusalem was by no means unique in this respect. When the liberty of the Senate was undermined by the centralised government the dependencies of Rome benefited greatly. Even in the horrible disorders of Nero's reign the provinces were on the whole fairly administered.

Another fallacy is that this congeries of peoples, nations and languages was kept together by military force. True the Roman army was a marvellous machine, an organisation which still moves our admiration and astonishment; but compared to modern armies it was almost infinitesimal. Gibbon estimates that about four hundred thousand troops held the Roman world together from the north of

England to the Sahara, and from the Coast of Portugal to the Euphrates. And the work of this comparatively small force was mainly defensive. The legions were stretched in a very thin line along the frontier, and especially the Eastern where the Parthians, a warlike and organised nation, were a constant menace to Rome. It was now no longer the citizen army of the Republican era, but a strictly professional force of highly trained soldiers, remarkable for its efficiency and mobility, thanks to the system of roads in every part of the Empire. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that in many places the inhabitants for centuries rarely or ever set eyes on even a small company of soldiers. In addition to this, no army, however large, could have held so extensive territory together, if the majority had not been tolerably contented. We are forced to the conclusion that the Roman Empire was, with exceptions, well governed.

In many respects the governing class of Romans were like the English aristocracy; and it is not without significance that in Parliament before the days of democracy, an apt

quotation from a Latin classic was as persuasive as an argument. Both people were at heart aristocratic and firmly believed that the world was best administered by a few great families, trained by generations of political experience. Both were deeply attached to ancient law and customs and suspicious of innovation. Both had the same idea of religion as a highly respectable affair, necessary for the maintenance of public tranquillity and beneficial in making the unseen powers favourable to the state. But under no circumstances must it be free from the civil authority or be allowed to interfere with practical politics. A church as by law established was the ideal of both. Nevertheless, both aristocracies had a keen sense of self-preservation. Both were jealous of their privileges; but ready to share them with others should occasion demand. Thus the story of Rome politically is one of extension of the franchise. First the plebeian order was admitted to complete equality with the old patrician families. Next the Latins became Roman citizens. Gradually citizens were to be found in all parts of the world, many of whom were not of Roman or even

of Italian birth. At last by A.D. 217 all free men were citizens of the Republic. This change was going on rapidly in the first century. In A.D. 69 Tacitus observes that the discovery was made that Rome was not the only place in which an Emperor could be created. The City of Rome was becoming the Roman world. Men forgot that they were Greeks or Syrians or Egyptians and declared with pride that they were Romans. The Roman *imperium,* if durability is the supreme test, is the most successful scheme of government the Western world has ever known. It meant the federation of the human race. It annihilated for a time national prejudice. It gave the world centuries of peace. It endured at Constantinople till 1453. Its shadow hung over Western Europe till 1806. Roman law is still the foundation of the legal system of many nations; and its study is necessary to every civilised lawyer. The Roman Church has inherited the traditions of imperial Rome. The Pope is still the Cæsar in one capacity, that of Pontifex Maximus. He claims to be the spiritual ruler of the world. All men he asserts ought to be his subjects.

The Jews as a people refused to acknowledge what all others within the confines of the Empire cheerfully accepted. The Roman government was not greatly to blame. Upon the whole those in authority were interested in so strange a people, and respected them for adhering to laws which, if repulsive to a Roman, were at least national. In the days of the Maccabees the Jews were recognised as allies of the Senate and People. Pompey, when he took the Temple, if he profaned it by entering the Holy of Holies, at least refrained from plunder. Cæsar allowed the Jews special privileges. Augustus and Tiberius seem to have been most patient with them. It is true that Caligula ordered his image to be set up in the Temple, possibly because all the Asiatic Cities were venerating the genius of Rome and Cæsar, and the refusal to honour them was regarded much as a refusal to admit the American flag into a church in war time; but, even then, the conduct of Petronius, the Governor of Syria, was most praiseworthy. The Roman governing classes were ready enough to honour Jewish administrative ability in the two Alex-

anders at Alexandria, and art in Aliturus the friend of Josephus. This will help us to understand, if not wholly to excuse the conduct of Josephus and those who agreed with him. A study of Herod the Great and his remarkable family, among whom there may have been several scoundrels, but hardly any fools, will be amply rewarded. Herod himself was a Jew by religion, if not of pure Jewish birth. In fact, the character of this able son of Edom, if it partook of the craft attributed to Jacob, possessed in a large measure the ferocity of Esau.

Herod the Great had a consistent policy which he never forsook. He meant at all costs to be the friend of Rome. It is hardly a paradox to state that Herod was true to no Roman, and unalterably faithful to Rome. Whether it was Cassius or Antony or Octavian who represented Rome, Herod supported him with the result that he died at the head of a little empire. His design was to give his Jewish subjects an influential position in his state, and to show them special favour, rebuilding their Temple with unheard-of magnificence, but at the same time to do

nothing to alienate the Romans. But nothing he could do could win the sympathy of the Jews, who detested him in his lifetime, and in the Mishna he appears not as Herod the Great, but as Herod the Slave. His two sons, Antipas and Philip, who were Tetrarchs of Galilee and Iturea respectively, were evidently able men if only from the fact that they both kept their governments for more than thirty years. Josephus described Philip as almost an ideal ruler, and says that Antipas had the confidence of Tiberius to such an extent as to incur the jealousy of the Governors of Syria. The women of this remarkable family were as influential as their brothers. The mother of Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, lived in terms of the closest intimacy with the greatest ladies of the imperial household. Agrippa was evidently one of the leaders of the Roman aristocracy, and despite his boundless extravagance and constant indebtedness, a great favourite when he became King of Judæa. He was a devout Jew and his son, Agrippa II, and his two sisters were faithful to their ancestral faith. But for Roman prejudice the

Emperor Titus would have married Berenice, the sister of Agrippa II.

The fortunes of this large and able family are a proof that there was no strong anti-Jewish prejudice in the highest ranks of Roman society; and they were the leaders of a section which desired nothing better than to recognise the existing order and to live as peaceable members of the Empire. They fully recognised the utter madness of a revolt against Rome and foresaw its result. Consequently when the imprudence of the Jews had provoked the contest they refused to side with them; and co-operated with the Romans. Their object was to conserve the Jewish religion but to induce the race to abandon impracticable schemes for national independence and to acquiesce in the Roman Empire.

This was the position of Josephus. It may not have been ideal, but it is at least intelligible. He firmly believed in the revelation of God to Moses; he recognised the superiority of his religion, but he was convinced of the hopelessness of his countrymen defying Rome. Thus he occupies the peculiar position of

being at the same time false to the Jews as a nation and a great defender of Judaism as a religion. Josephus and his friends, representing the social system of the day, and St. Paul standing for the religion of the future, virtually set before Judaism the same sort of proposition. Neither suggested that the Jews should abandon their religious customs or cease to live in accordance with the Law. Both had a love for and belief in Israel and its destiny. Josephus took the Greek version of the Old Testament and offered it in a popular and intelligible form to the Gentiles. Paul offered them the promises contained in Law and the Prophets interpreted as applied to mankind. Josephus' offer was this: "Continue to be Jews in religion, but accept the world order. You have fought a brave fight with Rome and have been conquered; and your Temple and your city have been destroyed. Accept the situation as an evidence of God's purpose to you. Be well disposed to other men, break down the barriers and live in harmony with the rest of the world." The answer was Quietus' war and Barcochba's rebellion, and the horrible results

which followed with the complete isolation of the Jews from the Roman world, long before the ascendancy of the Christian religion. Paul practically offered his nation the religious leadership of the world, if it would only hold out the right hand of fellowship to the Gentiles.

Chapter VI

JAMES—PETER—JOHN

In the Gospels and in the tradition of the Christian Church Jesus is said to have chosen twelve men as His special companions, and after His Resurrection to have sent them throughout the world to preach the Gospel. According to the Acts they remained at Jerusalem for a while as rulers of the infant community. Suddenly they simply disappear, and no more is heard of them. Yet almost every writer in the New Testament confirms the belief that Jesus chose Twelve Apostles.

Most of them are names and nothing more. In the different lists in the New Testament, the last four are never exactly the same. Even early legend cannot tell us precisely where most of them laboured. Whilst churches considered it to be the highest honour to be able to boast of an apostolic founder—and no one can charge them with

excess of criticism—none presumed to claim one of the Twelve, with the sole exception of Peter and perhaps of John. At an early date the "Acts" of some Apostles were circulated; but these were so wildly incredible, that the responsible authorities of the Church disowned them. The traditional scenes of their labours were selected with all possible vagueness. India, Scythia, and other unknown or scarcely known districts are mentioned. A Gospel is of course attributed in early tradition to Matthew. Of that, "according to John," it will be necessary to speak later. In this Gospel it is true one or two of the Twelve are said to have asked questions, or are connected with certain incidents; but with the exception of Thomas, they give no evidence of individuality. Peter alone is a real character, unless we include Judas, who betrayed his Master. Three names in the Synoptic Gospels are specially selected as the closest companions of Jesus: Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John. Jesus took them with Him on certain very solemn occasions. He gave Peter his name "the Rock" instead of Simon, and James and John He

called "Sons of Thunder." According to Acts James suffered martyrdom at the hands of Herod Agrippa; and then another James whom Paul calls "the Lord's brother" takes the lead in Jerusalem. John is twice mentioned in Acts as the companion of Peter, but nothing is related of him independently.

But we may assume that, beside the later convert, St. Paul, there were three typical Christian teachers, all of whom were supposed to have been closely in touch with Jesus Himself, James, the brother of Jesus, Peter, and John. They are connected with Jerusalem, Rome, and Ephesus, respectively.

The Lord's work was continued by two classes of representatives—His family, and His personal followers. Whether these worked in harmony or independently it is impossible to say. All we know of is that in Acts the original community consisted of the Eleven—the vacancy caused by Judas Iscariot not having been filled, the women, the Mother of Jesus and His brethren. Of the Mother nothing is told us outside the Gospels, except for this notice in Acts. In none of the Epistles of the New Testament

is she so much as mentioned. The time when she was to take a prominent place in the Christian religion had not yet come. Four "brothers"—the exact relationship is not determined—are mentioned by Mark, James, Judas, Joseph, and Simon (Mark VI: 3). In Acts a James suddenly makes his appearance as the head of the community at Jerusalem. At the council where the treatment of the Gentiles was discussed, this James seems, as has been shown, to have acted as the arbiter and to have given the decree. We next hear of him in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (in reference to a visit to Jerusalem), "But of the other apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother" (Gal. I: 19); and those who opposed Peter's action in eating with the Gentiles "came from James" (Gal II: 12). Once more, on the occasion of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem, he goes to "James and the elders" (Acts XXI: 18); and they advise him to conciliate the prejudice against him by paying the expenses of some Christian Jews who were under a vow, which they were too poor to discharge by paying for the necessary sacrifice. We

have an epistle in the New Testament addressed to the twelve tribes of the dispersion by James "the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," and another by "Jude the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James." This is all the information we have of the family of the Lord in the Christian canonical scriptures.

Josephus is our next witness. In the *Antiquities* XX 9: 1 he relates the death of James just before the siege of Jerusalem.

"The younger Ananus, who as we have told you already, took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees. . . . Festus was now dead, and Albinus was upon the road; so (Ananus) assembled the Sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ whose name was James, and some of his companions; and when he had formed an accusation against them, he delivered them to be stoned; but as for those who seemed the most equitable of the citizens, and such as were most uneasy at the breach of the law, they disliked what was done," etc.

Ananus was deposed when the new procurator Albinus arrived in Judæa.

An early Christian writer named Hegesippus gives an independent and somewhat more detailed account of the death of James. He was highly honoured by the Jews as the holiest of men, and he alone was allowed to enter into the Holy Place. He was a Nazarite from his mother's womb. He prayed repeatedly for his nation, so that his knees became hard as those of a camel. When there was a danger of a disturbance before the siege of Jerusalem the Scribes and Pharisees begged James to declare to the people that Jesus was not the Christ. They placed him on a pinnacle of the temple that he might be the better heard. As he preached Jesus as the Saviour he was cast down and killed by a fuller's club as he prayed for his murderers (Euseb. *H. E.* II: 23).

The influence of the family of Jesus Christ did not end with the death of His brother. The other brethren and their descendants were called *Desposyni* (belonging to the Lord). Eusebius, the church historian, on the authority of Africanus, the chronographer,

says they lived at Nazara and Cochaba in Palestine (or Judæa). When the Jewish genealogies had been destroyed they were careful to preserve their own from *The Book of Daily Records* (Euseb. *H. E.* I: 7).

The last mention of these brethren is in quotations by Eusebius from Hegesippus. Domitian, hearing that descendants of David were alive, sent for the grandchildren of Jude, the Lord's brother. When they came to Rome and were seen to be simple peasants, they were sent back to Palestine. In the days of Trajan, Symeon, son of Clopas, was accused of being descended from David and a Christian, and was crucified at the age of one hundred and twenty (Eusebius *H. E.* III: 32 and IV: 22). With this ends all that can be considered in any way to be authentic as regards "the brethren of the Lord" and the Church of Jerusalem. Our next task must be to see whether any inferences can legitimately be derived from this evidence.

James, in the first place, was highly reverenced by the Jews as a man of great sanctity and an ascetic. We meet with an earlier male and female counterpart in St. Luke's

Gospel in Simeon and Anna, "who departed not from the Temple"; later we have examples of Jewish hermits like John the Baptist and Josephus' instructor, Banus, as well as the fraternities of the Essenes and Philo's *Therapeutæ*. In the Judaism of the first century, as well as in the Christianity of the fourth, there were similar examples of the ascetic life. The whole subject of Jewish retirement from the world is deserving of careful study.

Secondly, James represents a very early stage of a Christianity, or, rather, an acceptance of Jesus as Messiah, which was highly revered in Jerusalem; and Acts may be perfectly correct in the statements that the Christian community was distinguished by "having favour with all the people." According to Josephus, the execution of James, as well as that of the Baptist, brought misfortune on those who inflicted it. After the flight to Pella, in obedience to their Master's command, this Jewish Christian community seems gradually to have disappeared, unless it continued in some of the so-called Ebionite sects.

Thirdly, Christianity, like the religion of

Moses and Mohammed, before it became nationwide or universal, showed signs of being a family religion. The "brethren of the Lord" must have been influential for some time in the community; and there is a story that Domitian heard of some of their descendants and, having summoned them to Rome, found that they were harmless simple farmers in Palestine, which is not without significance.

In the New Testament there is an Epistle attributed to James, and whether genuine or not, the fact may indicate that it was considered to embody the sort of opinions held by the Christians at Jerusalem. A brief summary of it is here sufficient, bearing in mind that it is by no means contemptible as a Greek literary composition. It is addressed to "the Twelve Tribes of the Dispersion." It is not so much an epistle as a moral treatise.

"Count it joy if you suffer tribulation. The trial of our faith makes us patient. If you lack wisdom ask God for it; but do not pray doubtfully: those who do this are like storm-tossed ships. Rejoice, if you are poor, that God has exalted you; if you are rich

that He has abased you. Riches are like the grass which the sun withers. Happy are those who endure temptation, for they shall receive a crown of life. But God does not tempt any one; it is a man's own desire, possibly the Rabbinic 'evil impulse,' which does. Only good comes from God, who is the Unchangeable. Avoid wrath, be swift to hear and slow to speak. But do not hear and not act. A man who does this is like one who looks at his own face in a mirror and leaves no picture behind. Pure religion is this: 'To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.' "

So far the first chapter. The second has much grim irony, not devoid of humour. Do not respect persons for their riches. When a well-dressed man comes into a synagogue, you welcome him and say, "Sit here in a good place"; then a poor man comes and you say, "Stand there or sit at my footstool." Surely God chose the poor, and not the rich, who insult you and blaspheme the honourable name you bear. Remember you live under a royal law. You cannot keep half, and neg-

lect the rest: every commandment applies to you. It is a law of liberty, and a law of mercy, and by it you will be judged. Do not think you will be saved because you are believers only. This faith is like to the benevolence which says to a wretched beggar, "Go in peace and be warmed and fed," and gives the poor man nothing to help him. There is no use in believing in One God as every Jew professes every day: the devils believe and tremble. Abraham and Rahab are examples of real faith. They believed; but they also acted.

The tongue needs constant control. It is a small part of our body; but, like a ship's rudder, it guides the whole. It is the most untameable thing on earth. You can tame wild beasts or serpents, but not the tongue, that "unruly member."

Next comes an exhortation to peace. He that speaketh evil of his brother and judges him judges the law, and we must do the law and not judge it. We must not say we will do this or that, or go to make gain to this place or that; for we know not what to-morrow may bring. Let us rather say, "If

the Lord will, we will live and do something."

There is a terrific denunciation of coming misery on the rich, who keep back the hire of their reapers whose cries "are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." Endurance is the great thing, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord." The afflicted are to pray, those who rejoice are to sing. Elijah, a man like ourselves, withheld and brought the rain by prayer. In sickness one should call for the elders of the Church to anoint the invalid with oil, and the prayer of faith will save him, and he shall obtain pardon for his sins. To convert a sinner is to "cover a multitude of sins." The only mention of Jesus is at the beginning where James declares himself His servant, and we are not to hold our faith in Him in respect of persons. His precept not to swear by heaven, etc., but to let our yea be yea and our nay, nay, is repeated.

The teaching of James more closely follows that of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, with its apt illustrations, its practical good sense, and its pungency, than anything else in Christian literature. If this was the re-

ligion of the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem, the loss of that little community was a serious one.

From James we turn to Peter. In that strange romance under the name of Clement, Peter is the subordinate, and reports his proceedings to his "Lord James." In the New Testament his portrait is drawn by very different hands, and under varying circumstances, but his character is always the same. Whether in the Synoptic, or in the Fourth Gospel, or in Acts or in Paul, or even in the First Epistle, which bears his name, it is the same Peter—impulsive, generous, liable to rush into situations in which he found it difficult to remain steadfast. If ever a real man was described by many men with a certain consistency it is St. Peter.

For our present purpose it is sufficient to say that in Acts Peter takes the leading part in the earliest Church; but, after he has taken the decisive step of baptising the Gentile Cornelius, and a little later escaped death at the hands of Herod, he ceases to be the head of the Church at Jerusalem and somewhat mysteriously disappears (Acts XII: 17). It

may not here be out of place to give the facts about him as we find them in the New Testament.

In the first three Gospels Peter is not only the spokesman, but practically the sole representative of the Twelve. Even when James and John are associated specially with him, as they are invariably on such great occasions as the raising of Jairus' daughter, the Transfiguration, and the Agony in the Garden, it is Peter, as a rule, who acts and speaks. It is the same in Acts, Peter is associated with the Twelve, but he represents the rest.

In the Epistles of Paul Peter, generally called Cephas, appears in two only, Galatians and I Corinthians.

According to Galatians Paul had formed communities of Gentile believers, the members of which had been taught that they might be Christians without becoming Jews. Some Judaizing Christians hostile to Paul had persuaded them to be circumcised, and observe the Law. They had also declared that he was not a properly qualified Apostle, and quoted against his teaching that of the original disciples. Paul maintained that he was an

apostle and had received his instructions from the risen Jesus. He relates what had happened since his conversion to show that, whilst he was a true apostle and recognised as such by the heads of the Jerusalem Church, he was independent. He tells the Galatians that three years after his conversion he had visited Cephas at Jerusalem and stayed there fifteen days (Gal. I: 18). Then after a long interval he went there again to explain to the heads of the community, James, Cephas, and John (note the order) what sort of gospel he had been preaching to the Gentiles (Gal. II: 9). It was then agreed that he should go to the Gentiles, and Peter to the Jews. The scene then changes to Antioch. Cephas, Paul, and Barnabas had associated freely with the Gentiles, till certain delegates from James arrived, when Cephas and Barnabas temporised by withdrawing from intercourse with the Gentiles. Thereupon Paul firmly rebuked Cephas for weakness and inconsistency.

This incident has given rise to some perplexity, and to one of the most famous modern theories about early Christianity. Here, perhaps, it will be sufficient to indicate the

light it throws upon the character of the two men. Peter (Cephas) appears to stand for a policy of compromise and Paul to act on principle alone. Peter is unwilling to come to a rupture with James, whilst Paul sees that the matter is one which admits of no temporising. On the whole the Church in this affair must have sided with Peter rather than Paul.

At Corinth one of the factions, into which the Church was divided, was "of Cephas" (I Cor. I: 12); and in speaking of his right, which he always forewent, of being supported by his converts and to bringing a wife in his missionary journeys, Paul alludes of the "brethren of the Lord and Cephas" (I Cor. IX: 5). There is no single allusion to Peter in the long Epistle of Paul to the Romans.

After this we have no certain testimony; but the evidence for Peter being at Rome is very strong. His name is almost invariably coupled with that of Paul. To this day the Roman Church keeps June 29th as one of its greater festivals, that of SS. Peter and Paul.

The so-called First Epistle of Peter is of doubtful, though respectable, authority; and

some think it merely a cento of Pauline phrases attributed to Peter. It does, however, bear on the attitude of the Petrine school towards Judaism.

There is nothing controversial in the letter. It is a moral treatise addressed to the sojourners of the Dispersion in Asia Minor. It is sent from Babylon—probably meaning Rome. Those to whom it is sent are enduring persecution. They are earnestly exhorted to submit to authority, and not to be guilty of rebellion or crime of any kind. If they are to suffer it must be as Christians, not as criminals. Jesus Christ has suffered, leaving them an example. There is no doctrine of His work or person, but stress is laid on the fact that He rose from the dead and will come as judge. The communities to whom Peter writes are Gentiles as well as Jews; and they are part of the New Israel. Once, in the words of Hosea, "not a people" (*Lo-ammi*), (Hosea I: 9), now the "People of the Living God" (I Peter II: 10). The persecutors are not Jews but Gentiles, who cannot understand the pure lives of the new believers.

Whoever wrote this represents the attitude of a non-controversial Christianity, showing no marked hostility to the older religion.

Peter's adventures in Christian legend are romantic and impossible; and the story of them was not originally told by orthodox writers. But his enemies are not Jews. The chief is the Samaritan wonder worker, Simon Magus. Peter is put to death by the Roman authorities under Nero, as is Paul; and the Jews are nowhere held as responsible. This is significant of the mind of the second and third centuries as to the attitude of the Jews towards the two founders of the Roman Church.

The last of our triad is the most difficult to deal with or define: it is John, the reputed author of the Fourth Gospel, three Epistles and the book of Revelation, and one of the three chosen companions of Jesus.

John, the son of Zebedee, as we have seen, appears only as the companion of Peter in Acts, and is never mentioned save once, in his letter to the Galatians, by Paul. Tradition says that he survived all the Apostles and died in extreme old age. A very ancient frag-

ment, the Muratorian, says that he wrote his Gospel in conjunction with Andrew and other apostles, being selected for the task by divine revelation. But we need not enter into a discussion as to the vexed question of the authorship. The important point for us is the attitude towards the Jewish religion. It appears to be affected by Pauline teaching, but goes much further. In the earlier lives of Jesus, His enemies are the lawyers, Scribes, and Pharisees, who are offended by His attitude towards minute points of legalism and fail to appreciate His spiritual conception of righteousness, which is prophetic rather than legalistic. Paul's anti-Judaism does not go such lengths as to condemn the Jew as the enemy, and when he seems to do so, it is in the cause of Gentile liberty. To John the Jews are the natural enemies of Jesus in His lifetime; and their opposition is not on legal, but on dogmatic, grounds. Let me take an example, premising that in the first three Gospels a miracle serves a twofold purpose. It is an evidence of the power given to Jesus, and of His compassionate nature. In the Fourth Gospel some miracles are not so much his-

torical events as signs which act as texts for discourses. One example of this is the healing of a lame man at the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem, compared with the healing of a man with a withered hand in the Synagogue, related by Mark.

> "And they watched Him whether He would heal on the Sabbath day that they might accuse Him. And He said unto the man with a withered hand, Stand forth. And He said unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, or to do evil? To save life or to kill? But they held their peace. And when He had looked about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts, He said unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out; and his hand was restored whole as the other. And the Pharisees went out and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him" (Mark III: 2-6).

Jesus deliberately healed on the Sabbath in order to enforce a principle that mercy is more

important than the exact legal carrying out of a commandment. The incident is within the sphere of morals; and there is nothing dogmatic about it.

Now turn to the miracle according to St. John. Observe that in Mark the Pharisees, representing the most religious, and the Herodians, the most worldly of the Jewish people enter into an unnatural alliance against Jesus. But in John it is "the Jews" who are offended at the violation of the Sabbath. And how does Jesus answer them? Not on the moral side at all, but on the dogmatic. He breaks the Sabbath by the divine right, inherent in Himself. "My Father," He says, "worketh hitherto, and I work. The Jews therefore sought the more to kill Him, not only because He had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God" (John V: 17 ff.). The Synoptists say that Jesus was reticent to the very last as to His Messiahship. John makes Him declare from the first almost defiantly that He is the Son of God.

I now come to a more striking example. One of the most terrific invectives in litera-

ture is Jesus' denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees in the Gospel of Matthew.

> "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Matt. XXIII: 23, Luke XI: 42 ff.).

The only reply a Jew could make to these words would be that they were a misrepresentation of Pharisaism; that the Pharisees were not as bad as that. But it would not be possible to take the position that, if Jesus were right in thus accusing His contemporaries, they were justified in devouring widows houses, because they prayed ostentatiously, or in being unmerciful or unloving, because they paid in infinitesimal tithe on the cheapest vegetables. In other words, Jesus' judgment of individuals might be questioned, but not the principles He advances.

Turn now to an invective in the Fourth Gospel. You will be surprised to find that it

is directed not against Scribes and Pharisees, but against the Jews "who believed on Him." Jesus said to them that if they continued in His word, the truth would make them free. They replied indignantly that they were of Abraham's seed and were never in bondage. Jesus says that God is not their Father. "If God were your Father ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God. . . . Ye are of your father, the devil." "Ye will not receive me nor my doctrine. Ye seek to kill me because I have told you the truth," and so on (John VIII: 31 ff). The discourse is really not moral but dogmatic, and is, possibly, not a contemporary report of the Lord's words, but an invective against some Judaizing Christians at the end of the first century. One can hardly imagine St. Paul using similar language in his most indignant moments.

For the breach is now, not ceremonial, but dogmatic. The dispute does not turn on the right of Jesus to set aside the literalism of the Law, nor to dispense his followers from observing it. The Jews are in error because they will not accept the divine sonship and the divine pre-existence of Jesus as the Word,

who was with the Father from all eternity. Paul mentions more casually the pre-existence of Jesus, and His place in Creation. John insists on them as fundamental articles of belief. He is the real founder of dogmatic Christianity, as opposed to Judaism. Yet, John is not quite anti-Judaic; for he reports the saying of Jesus to the women of Samaria, "Ye worship what ye know not, we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews" (John IV: 22).

There is still something to be said of the New Testament and the controversy between Christianity and Judaism. Here we have examined three aspects of primitive Christianity—James, the Lord's brother, probably more Jewish than Christian; Peter, the leading Apostle of Jesus, more Christian than Jewish; and "the disciple whom Jesus loved," though himself a Jew, almost entirely Christian.

Chapter VII

THE EARLY DISPUTES BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

The Christians did not at first attack Judaism directly, their arguments against it were intended for their fellow believers, with the object of showing wherein Judaism was imperfect and unsatisfactory. They could attempt no more; for to deny that the religion of Israel, which was based on the Old Testament, was true, would have been to destroy all the foundations of their belief that Jesus was the Messiah. Consequently the only thing to do was to show that the religion of Israel was imperfect, and that the Law was transitory and no longer binding. The first document is an isolated book in the New Testament called "The Epistle to the Hebrews." An early tradition assigned it to Paul; but the style is so different from his, that the Christians of Alexandria declared that it must be by another hand; and the Church of Rome, possi-

bly for another reason, long hesitated to receive it as canonical. It is uncertain to whom it was addressed. The title would imply that it was intended for Hebrew-speaking Christians; but as a literary composition it is deserving of all admiration as a product of the Greek of the First Century.

The epistle opens thus:

God has been always revealing Himself to Israel and His way of doing so has differed in every age. Now, in this last of the ages, it is by His Son the Image of Himself, whom He has made heir of all things. As the words of the Second Psalm, "Thou art my Son," indicate the Son is superior to all angels. No angel has been called a Son of God. They are ministering Spirits sent to minister to God's people who are the heirs of salvation. Nor is the age to come to be subjected to angels, but to Man, made lower than the angels but crowned in Christ with glory and honour. It was through the angels that the Law was given and on this account it was rigorous in its requirements, and the slightest breach of its commands justly merited punishment (Heb. II: 1-2). But those to whom

the Epistle is addressed have received a revelation direct from the Lord, and how can they escape "if they neglect so great salvation."

Suppose, though this is not universally acknowledged, the "Hebrews" to be Jewish Christians, that is, men accustomed to the Scriptures, the life, the tradition of Judaism, who have confessed their belief that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel. They were educated Hellenists, or the letter would have been meaningless to them; and accustomed, whether they had studied Philo or not, to Alexandrian methods of thinking. The writer of the Epistle, who was almost certainly not Paul, evidently is well acquainted with the book in the Apocrypha called the *Wisdom of Solomon.* To understand him an effort must be made to discover what such men as he and his correspondents thought the Messiah was. Of course, he calls Him "The Christ," as he must since he writes in Greek, but he does not use the title as some writers, even in the New Testament, as merely an honorific to the name of Jesus, but with all the implications natural to a Hellenistic Jew, when he spoke of Christ in the sense of "The Messiah." Twice at the

end of the letter he speaks of Jesus Christ (XIII:8 and 21) but usually when he speaks of Him as an historic Man he calls Him "Jesus," and when he uses the term Christ he means "The Messiah." The two are in his mind inseparable; yet for the purpose we have in view it is better to keep them distinct. Perhaps one should regard his doctrine not so much a "Christology" in the Christian sense, i.e., of the Person of the historic Jesus, as an exposition of what was signified by the word "Messiah." That Jesus was the Messiah the writer had no doubt. The "Hebrews," whoever they may have been, were evidently inclined to abandon, if not their belief in Jesus as the Messiah, at any rate the society of Christians, which they may have discovered to be far from congenial to them; and the letter is designed to warn them against the danger of such apostasy as is implied. They do not seem to have been disposed to be any more enthusiastic as Jews than as Christians; for the whole argument of the letter is directed, not against the contemporary Judaism attacked by Paul, but the religion of ancient Israel. The worship described is that of the Tabernacle, not of the

Temple. The writer reasons with such people somewhat academically, yet his arguments are suited to the occasion. His plea to them is briefly this: "You have accepted Jesus as the Messiah, and are disappointed. Do not however give up the Christian society and go back to your Hellenistic Judaism. Rather take a step worthy of sons of Abraham and the heroes of your nation and obey the call of God to come forth out of the Israel camp with the Messiah 'bearing his shame'" (Heb. XIII: 13).

Such is the object of the author; we have now to follow the arguments by which he enforces it in the following order. (1) First comes a statement of the doctrine of the Messiah, who is the Son of God and the consummation of all the promises of Israel (Heb. I: 1 ff). (2) Jesus is, as the "Hebrews" have acknowledged, the Messiah (Heb. III: 14, IV: 14). (3) One has therefore come Who is the fulfilment of the law, the priestly part of which was but a shadow and type of Him whom God had promised to send (Heb. X: 1). (4) As a result an eloquent appeal is made to follow the example of the holy men

of old from Abel to the martyrs of the Maccabean age (Heb. XI *passim*).

(1) The Messianic doctrine is that God manifests Himself by His Wisdom or Word by whom He created the ages. This is in some sense the theory of the book of *Wisdom* and Philo, based on the eighth chapter of Proverbs. The whole history of the human race as recorded in the Bible was a preparation for the manifestation of some one who would reveal the mind of God to mankind, which, by means of Israel, was to receive this perfect knowledge of God. There is no hint in the letter that this Being was to be the restorer or temporal deliverer of the nation. His sphere, as far as His appearance is concerned, might be on earth, but its main operations were to be in heaven in the very Presence of God. His object was to reconcile man to God; and He was to act as the intermediary. He was above the angels, who gave the Law from the hands of God, above Moses the faithful servant (Heb. III: 3), above Abraham the ancestor of the Levitical priesthood (Heb. VII: 4 ff). So far as we know the Jews had not hitherto declared that all

this would be fulfilled in a Messiah, who was to be an intermediary between God and His creatures to whom Philo had given such an one the title of the "Son of God." It is, however, quite possible to conceive of Jews holdin a doctrine such as has been indicated about the Messiah when He should appear. To the regular teachers, the exponents of the Law, the Law and Tradition were sufficient, but the study of apocalyptic literature and of Philo shows that in the first century there was a mystical Judaism and to this our author evidently appeals.

(2) Jesus is admittedly the Messiah; and the writer does not think it necessary to prove this; but to show what are its results in regard to the Old Covenant. One observes that he often uses the personal name in his argument and adds no title like Lord or Christ. The first time the name Jesus occurs is in the second chapter where Psalm XIX is quoted from the Septuagint. Man has been made lower than the angels and crowned with glory and honour and all things are put under his feet. But not yet. "Nevertheless, we see Jesus through suffering and death crowned

with glory and honour" (Heb. II:9). His sufferings and His taking the nature of the seed of Abraham make Him a high priest for mankind. Having demonstrated the priestly character of Jesus, our author calls Him Messiah, i.e., Christ Jesus. The Messiah is greater than Moses; for Moses was faithful as a servant and Messiah is a son. Jesus, being Messiah, is the Son of God who has entered into the heavens into the presence of God Himself. Messiah is the true High Priest because He has taken human nature and is in all respects but one like as we are. He has even been tempted as we are; but, unlike us, He is without sin (Heb. IV:15). Messiah did not take the High Priesthood upon Himself. He was called to it by God in the words of Psalm CX, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." This priesthood is superior to that of Aaron, because it is eternal and unchangeable; for Melchizedek, whom Abraham met and honoured as his superior, was "Without father or mother, without beginning of days or end of life." The Levitical priesthood was one of men who, after all were mortals, whose sacrifices need daily

repetition, but this higher priesthood of Messiah is eternal and unchangeable; and its sphere is not a tabernacle on earth but in heaven, where is being offered an everlasting sacrifice which needs no repetition, as do those on earth.

(3) This argument goes to far greater lengths than does that of St. Paul, whose contention is that the Law though "holy, just and good" need not be observed by Gentiles. Moreover, to him the keeping of the Law is a practical matter. "Let no man," he says, "judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath" (Col. II: 16); in other words, in keeping the Law as the Jews of his day observed it. The "Hebrews," on the contrary, are referred to the Law as it was given in the wilderness, to the worship of the Tabernacle and not even to that of the Temple. Paul does not even discourage Jewish Christians from legal observance, but contents himself with insisting that it is not necessary or desirable for Gentiles. The writer to the Hebrews takes a different attitude. He does not concern himself with the Law as prac-

tised in his time. He does not give even a hint that the Temple has been destroyed; but this fact does not necessitate an earlier date than is generally assigned to the letter, because the writer has no interest in the Temple but in the more ancient Tabernacle. To him Jewish worship is the service of God by Aaron and his sons as it was designed in the wilderness. In taking this line he strikes at the very root of the ancient religion by declaring it to be by its nature transitory and never intended to be other than a type and shadow of the real worship of God in heaven. The main theme of the Epistle is the worship of God as perfected in the Messiahship of Jesus, which that of the Tabernacle foreshadowed with its sanctuary on earth, contrasted with the true sanctuary in heaven, its mortal priesthood of men who must die, with the everlasting Messiah as priest, the sacrifices which have to be repeated and cannot cleanse from sin with one eternal sacrifice effectually reconciling man to God. The controversy is here on the highest plane. There are no recriminations, the dignity and temper of the writer are admirable. The Law, not so

much the ceremonial as the worship instituted through Moses, is a thing of the past; it has become old and is fast vanishing away.

(4) But the letter has a distinctly practical end, namely to stay the danger of apostasy. The "Hebrews" are in danger of drifting away (to employ the writer's own phrase), if not from their belief that Jesus is the Messiah, at least from all fellowship with the rest of the Christian community (Heb. X: 25). To stay this tendency the writer gives vent to one of the most fervent outbursts of eloquence in the New Testament. He extols the faith, that is the fidelity, of the ancient worthies of the Old Testament, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses and onward to the martyrs of the Maccabean age. There is no finer panegyric on Hebrew heroism and endurance. Here are the concluding verses of the eleventh chapter in the sonorous periods of King James' version:

> "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the

sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented: Of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report by faith, received not the promise."

If this passage had been recently recovered would not every Jew regard it as the highest tribute to his people and their sufferings for the sake of the world? It is to the example of the saints of the Old Covenant of God with Israel that the writer appeals when he exhorts those "Hebrews" who had accepted Jesus as

the Messiah to go forth and sacrifice all for Him.

A Jew, if he could not agree with this conclusion, would find it hard to deny that the argument is temperately framed, that the appeal is eloquently made and that the whole epistle is a remarkable example of the best kind of controversy.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is anonymous; its attribution to Paul rests on no certain tradition and is confirmed neither by the style nor position of the writer. The Church hesitated in accepting it and did so in the end on its intrinsic merits.

The next document to be discussed is also anonymous, but as "Hebrews" was attributed to Paul this letter is said to be the work of Barnabas. The excellence of Hebrews makes the orthodox contend for the Pauline authorship, and the defects of the other Epistle make good men hope it was not written by the gentle Barnabas. That it is an early work seems certain: a sketch of the argument enables us to pronounce as to its merits. The letter was evidently appreciated, and was quoted as Scripture. In one of the oldest MS. of the

Bible (the Sinaitic) it appears at the end. The author himself had a good opinion of his work as the following statement shows:

> "For it says, 'And Abraham circumcised from his household eighteen men and 300 men.' What then was the knowledge that was given to him? Observe, that he says eighteen first and then after a pause says three hundred. Eighteen is IH, so you have Jesus! but because the cross in the T was to possess grace he says 300. In the TIH you have Jesus in two letters and the cross in one. He knoweth this who placed and grafted this doctrine in us. No one ever learned a more excellent lesson than this from me, but ye, I know, are worthy to receive it." (Ch. IX).

The main contention is, not as in Hebrews that the Old Law with Tabernacle, Temple, and ordinances was intended to prefigure a higher truth, and was abrogated because in Messiah that truth had been revealed, but that the Mosaic legislation was always intended to be taken allegorically and the Jews

had in their wilfulness understood it literally, and had devised an absurd system of sacrifice and legislation.

One chapter on unclean food will suffice (Ch. X). The prohibition to eat the eagle, the hawk and the crow intended to prevent our associating with people who provided no food for themselves but prey upon society. We should call them "middlemen or profiteers." He goes on to treat us to some very strange natural history about animals who are males one year and females the next. But further details may be spared. Animals who divide the hoof may be eaten, because they are the types of the righteous who walk in this world and look forward to the next. Those addressed are warned not to become proselytes to Judaism.

If *Hebrews* is a good specimen of anti-Jewish controversy, *Barnabas* is certainly a bad one, but it marks a stage. It is now impossible for a man to be at once a Jew and a Christian. The Law is represented as neither holy, just nor good, as Paul calls it, nor as a shadow of good things to come as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, but as moral pre-

cepts which for generations have been misunderstood by the perversity of the Jews.

The last part of Barnabas is a discourse on the "Way of Life" and the "Way of the Black One." We find the same sort of teaching in the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.* It was used as a manual for instruction at an early date, but was for centuries lost and only recovered in 1875 by Bishop Bryennius in Constantinople. The only thing necessary here to observe is its very Jewish tone; Dr. C. Taylor called it intensely Jewish; and if so it is a strange indication that the Christian circle to which this belongs had hardly broken with the spirit of Judaism. The Jewish traits are the ordinances about baptism and the prayer at the Eucharist over the Cup "We give thanks unto thee, our Father, for the Holy Vine of David, Thy Son,—and as the broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let thy Congregation be gathered together." All these seem to be thoroughly Jewish ideas wrought up into Christian language. The prophets also are to be looked on as High Priests and paid by tithes and first fruits.

The anti-Jewish polemic is seen in the precept about fasting. Jesus said: "When ye fast be not as the hypocrites; for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast. But thou when thou fastest anoint thy head and wash that thou appear not unto men to fast, but to thy Father which seest in secret" (Matt. VI: 16-18). The *Teaching* must have known this precept and this is what he makes of it: "Let not your fasts be with the hypocrites; for they fast on the third and fifth day, but fast ye on the fourth day and the Preparation Day" (the day before the Sabbath). The spirit of fasting, on which Jesus lays so much stress, is ignored; only the formal difference as to fasting days is emphasised! Even in fasting days there is to be a breach with the Jews.

We now come to the Ignatian letters. These were written by a Christian bishop who was being sent from Antioch to Rome to suffer martyrdom. On his way he wrote letters to Churches and to his friend, Polycarp, seven of which are pronounced to be genuine. He is seriously perturbed at the dangers the Church is in from its disunion and from heresy, and

he also has some warnings against Judaism. The letters have been the subject of great dispute among Christians because of Ignatius' high conception of the dignity of bishops and have therefore been more scrutinized than any ecclesiastical document outside the New Testament.

Writing to the Church of Magnesia, he says, "Be not led astray by strange doctrines or by old fables which profit not; for if we are still living in Judaism, we confess we have not received grace" (VIII).

"If then they who walked in ancient customs came to a new hope, no longer keeping the Sabbath, but living according to the Lord's (day) on which our life sprang up through Him and His death (IX). Put aside the old leaven, which has grown old and sour, and turn to the new leaven which is Jesus Christ . . . It is inconsistent to talk of Jesus Christ and to practise Judaism, for Christianity did not pin its faith on Judaism but Judaism on Christianity (X)."

To the Philadelphians Ignatius writes: "But if any one interpret Judaism to you do not listen to him; for it is better to hear Chris-

tianity from the circumcised than Judaism from the uncircumcised, but if neither of these speak to me of Jesus Christ, they are like monuments and tombs of the dead, on which names only are written" (VI).

Thus we see that by A.D. 108, the date of Ignatius' martyrdom according to the Eusebian Chronicle, Judaism is regarded by orthodox Christians as an entirely alien religion, and it is remarkable that from the days of the Ignatian letters and onwards the style of Christian writings undergoes a change.

It has been constantly necessary to call attention to the very Hebraic character of the New Testament, even when its Greek style is most cultivated. It is the same with most contemporary, non-canonical literature, Barnabas and I Clement. In Ignatius the thought is thoroughly Christian but seems more Hellenic. The New Testament style was becoming obsolete. There is one notable feature in these Ignatian letters. The martyr has no love for the Jews. He does not so much as allow Judaism to be explained to his flock. He hardly uses the Old Testament in his letters. There are three reminiscences of the language

of Isaiah, one of the Psalms, and a few words of Proverbs are quoted as Scripture. This shows how little Ignatius appears to be under Judaic influence, yet he never hints that the Jews are in any way his enemies in the sense of desiring his death. This paves the way for inquiry into the subject of the attitude of the Jews toward the Church in the days of persecution. Have we evidence to show that the Jews took a prominent part in inciting the heathen government to persecute the Christian Church?

Chapter VIII

THE REVOLT OF BARCOCHBA and THE MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP

The outbreaks of Jewish patriotism in the second century which culminated in the War of Barcochba are supposed to mark the final stage in the breach between Jews and Christians. The view usually taken in brief is this: Hadrian in 131 proposed to make Jerusalem into a Gentile city by creating on its site a Roman Colony to be called after his name Aelia. He did all in his power to insult the nation, which had given great provocation some fifteen years before in the reign of Trajan, but had since been at peace. This provoked a rebellion headed by a man called by the name of Barcochba, "son of a star," who finally entrenched himself in a stronghold called Bethara, or Bether, near Jerusalem. His claims were supported by the famous

Rabbi Akiba, the saint and martyr of the age, who declared the rebel leader to be the Star, foretold in Balaam's prophecy, and, as such, the Messiah. In this war the Christians, because they would not join in the rebellion, were cruelly persecuted for refusing to blaspheme Jesus. When Hadrian at the end of the war made Jerusalem a thoroughly heathen city, and called it Aelia, there was a new Christian church under a Gentile Bishop named Marcus.

From this time forward, the Jews were the implacable enemies of the Church and were particularly active in stirring up persecution by inciting the heathen to put the law in force against the Christians. The most remarkable example of this is the martyrdom of St. Polycarp of Smyrna, which was attributed to their instigation. The business at hand is to see how far this notion is confirmed by the facts at our disposal.

These questions demand solution:

1. What do we actually know about the wars under Trajan and Hadrian?
2. Did Akiba really co-operate with Barcochba?

3. Did the Jews take an active part in the persecutions of the second century?

After this it will be possible to enter upon the subject of the controversies of this age between the Church and the Synagogue.

1. The first question one must ask when we meet with an event in the past is the natural one—"What contemporary evidence have we for it?" For the whole reign of Hadrian we have to acknowledge that we have practically none. The two main authorities are Dion Cassius and the Augustan History. Dion Cassius flourished under Septimius Severus, almost a century after the accession of Hadrian; and we have, not even Dion's history, but only an epitome by Xiphilinus, a Byzantine of the twelfth century. The life of Hadrian is attributed to Spartianus, one of the six writers of a history of the Roman Emperors from Hadrian to the accession of Diocletian, A.D. 283. The one contemporary who alludes to the Jewish War is Justin Martyr, who in his *First Apology,* Ch. 31, says that "Barcochebas, the leader of the revolt, gave orders that the Christians alone should be led

to cruel punishments, unless they would deny Christ and utter blasphemy." We find the same writer engaged in a not unfriendly discussion with Trypho, who had lately escaped from the Jewish war. Another Christian contemporary writer quoted by Eusebius of Cæsarea (c. 320) is Aristo of Pella. Unfortunately nothing is known of Aristo's work, but, as coming from Pella, he was probably possessed of first-hand knowledge. This is what Eusebius relates, "in the very words of the Greek historians." There was, he says, another disturbance in the eighteenth year of Trajan. In Alexandria and Cyrene the Jews, possessed by some terrible and factious spirit, attacked the Greeks who lived side by side with them. The Greeks retreated to Alexandria and killed the Jews in the city, and the Jews outside devastated the country. They were joined by the Cyrenian Jews, who were led by a man named Lucuas. Finally Trajan sent Marcius Turbo to Egypt with a strong force by land and sea and the rebellion was suppressed. Fearing an outbreak in Mesopotamia, the emperor despatched Lucius Quintus, who slew a large number of Jews and in

reward was made Governor of Judæa. This happened before August 117, when Trajan died (Eusebius, *H. E.* IV. 2).

Dion confirms what Eusebius has related with variations. The Jews of Egypt and Cyrene were led by a man named Andreas (not Lucuas). They committed nameless atrocities among the Gentiles; and in Cyprus, the Jews, led by Artemion, put to death 240,000 people. (Dion's father was Governor of Cilicia, which included Cyprus.) Various persons took part in subduing the Jews, among them Lucius. This is all we can get from the Epitome of Dion, who tells of a revolt in Cyprus, not mentioned by Eusebius. This first Jewish War was evidently a very serious affair, but does not help to our knowledge of what is known of the rebellion of Barcochba, which is supposed to have broken out in the year 132 and to have been caused by a project of Hadrian to rebuild Jerusalem as a Roman colony and to forbid the Jews the practice of circumcision.

Rufus, Governor of Judæa, says Eusebius, with an imperial army destroyed myriads of Jews, men and women, "using their madness as

a pretext." The leader of the Jews, "a robber and a murderer," was called Barchochebas, which means a star. He proclaimed that he was the Star come to deliver the people and did many wonders. The war reached its height in the eighteenth year of Hadrian at Bithara, a fortress near Jerusalem, which was taken after a long siege. The Jews from this time forth were forbidden "even to approach the land of their fathers". Eusebius says he is quoting Aristo of Pella. After the rebellion had been suppressed a Roman city was built, called Aelia after the Emperor. (Euseb. *H. E.* IV. 6.)

Dion's account is almost equally meagre. When Hadrian was in the East in A.D 133 he began to found Jerusalem and on the site of the Temple he raised a new one to Zeus. This excited the people to a revolt which broke out when Hadrian departed. They had made preparation for this by contracting to make weapons for the army, and making such bad ones that they were thrown on their hands as useless. The Jews did not fight in the open, but concealed themselves in underground passages and sallied forth to murder and pillage.

The Jews all over the world united in hostility to the Romans, and other nations were joining them. Hadrian sent his best generals, of whom Julius Severus, governor of Britain, was the first to be despatched. Severus did not attempt to force a battle: he relied on a policy of attrition and wore out the insurgents, very slowly, but without much serious loss on his part. Fifty garrisons were destroyed and nine hundred and eighty towns. It is estimated that upwards of 580,000 Jews perished, besides those who died of hunger and disease. Then, in contradiction of what he has said about the slight loss of the Romans in the war, he adds that Hadrian's letter to the Senate omitted the words "I and the armies are in health." (Dion Cassius *Hist. Rom.* LXIX 12-14.)

Spartianus, in his *Life* of Hadrian, remarks that the cause of the Jewish war was an edict forbidding self mutilation (*mutilare genitalia*), which may have been taken as an attempt to stop the practice of circumcision. This historian says nothing of the war itself (Spart. in *Hist. Aug.* XIV).

The information we have is little enough,

and of what we have much appears hard to believe. The general fact of the war in Judæa is confirmed by several non-Jewish writers, notably by Jerome, who knew Palestine, and Augustine's friend Orosius. Another Christian writer deserves some attention, namely Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis (d. 403), who was born in Palestine, and—it has been said—was a Jew who embraced the Christian faith. In his treatise on *Measures and Weights* he says that Hadrian, when he proposed to rebuild Jerusalem as Aelia, gave the post of overseer to a kinsman of his own named Aquila of Sinope in Pontus, who was at first a Christian but, disgusted with the Church because it rebuked his practice of magic, joined the Jews.

2. The next question is this, What part had Akiba in this rebellion? This bears on the point at issue which turns on the contention that the Jews finally broke with the Christians because of Barcochba's claim to be the Messiah, and the Christians' refusal to support him in the war with the Romans. Justin's statement that Barcochba delivered "the Christians only to cruel punishment" because they would not curse Jesus (*Apol.* I. 31), must be

respectfully received because he was a native of the country and a contemporary; but it is only the later Eusebian Chronicle which attributes the persecution to the Christians' refusal to join in the war. But neither he nor Eusebius nor any other Christian writer so much as mentions Akiba. For all his great fame, Akiba is a somewhat shadowy person; but he must have been a very old man in the days of Hadrian, when he was almost certainly martyred. He had seen in its glory Herod's Temple, which was destroyed more than 60 years before the war. In addition it is at least possible that Akiba was imprisoned by the Romans before the rebellion broke out.

There does not seem to be any Christian writer of early date who connects Akiba with Barcochba or affirms his Messianic claim, and what Jewish testimony we have is probably late. Two passages are quoted by Münter, the only modern historian of the war: "Rabbi Akiba was great and wise, and one of the wise in the Mishna; he was armour bearer of King Barcochba, of which he said, 'He is Messiah,' " quoting *Sanhedrin.* Another is in the *Yad hazakah* of Maimonides (11th century),

"Bethea was taken in which there reigned a great king, *whom the* Israelites and elders of the wise men thought was Messiah." It was natural that in later days Jews should connect together the hero of a great rebellion in defence of Jerusalem and the most revered of doctors and martyrs of Judaism, and believe that Akiba called Barcochba the Messiah.

For the figure of the patriot soon took heroic form. According to Jerome he was believed to breathe forth fire, which the Christian Saint attributes to a fraud. He was represented as a magnificent warrior, as remarkable for his appearance as for his prowess. The failure of his efforts to free Israel was at least condoned by the fact that he was the last warrior who appeared in arms against Rome. That he should have the sanction of Akiba in his holy war was only to be expected. It was but natural that he should appear in the haze of romance as a national hero who died for his country's cause. The next step must be to enquire what the facts are, hard as it is to glean them from so arid a field.

The reign of Trajan was marked by an outburst of Jewish fanaticism directed against,

not so much the Romans, as their Gentile neighbours. It began in Egypt, a series of massacres and retaliations, the usual accompaniment of a racial war in the East. The mobs in Alexandria were proverbially bloodthirsty, and we may be fairly sure that there were atrocities on both sides, and Dion tells us only those committed by the Jews. The Roman government was merciless in putting down disorders; and as the Jews were held to be to blame, they were severely dealt with. Now comes a difficulty. Quintus, as Eusebius calls Quietus, was sent to pacify the Jews in Mesopotamia or, as Eusebius expresses it, to clear the province of them. Readers of Josephus, who recollect the story of Asineus and Anileus, will realise how formidable the Jewish freebooters were, and how dangerous they might be if they brought about a Parthian invasion to help their compatriots in Egypt. Quietus, who originally was a Mauretanian chief, but had become the most trusted general of Trajan, did his work, and the Jews kept quiet for some time. For his services Quietus was made governor of Judæa (Euseb. *H.E.* IV. 2).

When Trajan died, in 117, Hadrian surrendered his predecessor's conquests in the East; and, while keeping his army in the highest state of efficiency, pursued a strictly peaceful policy. Judæa seems to have been quiet till Hadrian, in 131, visited the East, and is credited with a line of action almost incredible for its folly. He is said to have issued an edict forbidding circumcision and to have proposed to build a temple of Zeus on the site of the Jewish sanctuary. To do this was to arouse every Jew in the Empire and to embroil the East in war. It is hardly possible that a statesmanlike prince, as Hadrian is always represented to have been, could have acted thus imprudently. That Hadrian, when he visited Jerusalem, contemplated building something there is more than probable. How far the city had recovered since its demolition by Titus we have no means of judging. It must have been partially restored, and probably contained a large proportion of Jews. The Emperor enjoyed going from city to city and giving each place he visited something to mark the occasion, usually a public building. The report that he intended to restore the city

was alone enough to arouse suspicion. An edict against those who practised mutilation might have been reputed to the credulous people as an attack on their distinctive ancestral rite. But Hadrian could hardly have thus attempted to suppress Judaism by aping the mad policy of Antiochus Epiphanes. Besides Judaism was recognised by law. Even Vespasian had allowed the conquered Jews to keep their customs if they were peaceable citizens. What possibly happened may be paralleled by the cause of the Indian Mutiny when the rumour arose that the British intended to defile its soldiery by making them bite cartridges prepared with pigs' grease. This report, industriously circulated, caused the great mutiny; and it is quite conceivable that a similar misrepresentation as to Hadrian's intentions aroused all Jewry to a dangerous revolt. The evidence is insufficient to force us to accept the generally received story, and conjecture is therefore presumable. As to the war, Dion is probably right when he says it was a guerilla campaign such as might be expected in a country as full of defences and hiding places as Palestine; but it is difficult

to accept his statement as to the number of cities and men destroyed if it were confined to Judæa. There may have been a general uprising of Jews, as the fear of Hadrian of foreign intervention seems to imply. But our general conclusion must be this: that the war of Barcochba is so obscure that all we can say is that it happened, and it is not possible to draw conclusions about it.

3. There remains Justin Martyr's statement that Barcochba persecuted some Christians and this doubtless he did. But it does not seem likely that there were enough Christians in Judæa or in Palestine to have made their neutrality conspicuous or important enough to draw persecution upon them, nor is it probable that their passive Messianism of the sect would provoke the Jews even if their leader claimed to be the Messiah. The earlier movement in Trajan's reign was against all the heathen and it is very doubtful whether the fanatics made much distinction between heathen and Christian Gentiles. Jewish Christians may, of course, have suffered as apostates; but, as has been shown, this sort of believer was gradually disappearing. The

interesting topic at this time is: Did the Jews show any particular animosity to Christians during the days of persecution from the suppression of the revolt in Palestine to the reign of Constantine?

They certainly do not appear prominent as a nation after the severe defeats they suffered at the hands of Trajan's and Hadrian's generals. The schools which Akiba had done so much to promote flourished, but the militant patriotism which he is said to have encouraged was a thing of the past. It would appear as if Jewish energy had become intensive, intent on conserving the nation and its Law, and not troubling much about what men thought about or did in the outside world. Christianity might well have become to these no more than a rival religion like Mithraism or the Isis worship. But, on one occasion, the Jews are said to have shown great activity in exciting persecution. This was in the martyrdom of St. Polycarp at Smyrna. The story of the martyrdom is in a letter from the Church at Smyrna to the Church of Philomelium, and it is worth giving a few extracts, as the beautiful tone of the epistle must be appreciated.

There had been a serious persecution. The Christians had been terribly tortured in order to make them recant and finally were exposed to the wild beasts in the arena. They evidently met with no sympathy from the populace; and, when the games at which the martyrs had suffered were over, there arose a cry, "Kill the atheists; let Polycarp be sought for."

Polycarp was much more than bishop of the Christians in Smyrna: he was the man most revered in the whole Church. By this time (A.D. 156) he was probably the last survivor of those who had conversed with the Apostles of Christ, he had been the friend and correspondent of the martyr Ignatius, he had recently visited Rome and had been received with the highest honours by the Bishop Anicetus. He was at least eighty-six years old. The Christians had withdrawn him from the city; and he was living in retirement. Those of his household had betrayed him to the peace officers (*eirenarchs*), the chief of whom was named Herod.

On arriving at Polycarp's house, they found him at supper in an upper room. He received them graciously, ordered food and drink to be

set before them and asked leave to pray for an hour. He prayed for two hours, "remembering all his friends, whether small or great, high or low, and the whole Catholic Church throughout the world." On approaching the city, he was met by Herod, the justice of the peace, and his father Nicetas, who made the old man sit with them and remonstrated with him on his folly in not saving his life by some such slight act of compliance as saying "Cæsar is Lord," and sacrificing. When their patience was exhausted, they pushed Polycarp out of the carriage and, though his skin was scraped by the fall, he walked on to the arena, as though he had not noticed that he had been hurt. The place was crowded and the din prevented any one being heard. Polycarp was stood before the Pro-consul of Asia, who entreated him to save his life from the fury of the mob. "Swear by the genius of Cæsar"; say, "Away with the atheists." (Atheism was the crime constantly charged against Christians.) But Polycarp took the opportunity to point to the crowd clamouring for his death, and to say "Away with the atheists." The Pro-consul then asked Polycarp to curse

Christ; he replied, "For eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has never wronged me. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" Another chance was given. "Swear by the genius of Cæsar." Polycarp replied that he was a Christian and would explain what he meant if the Pro-consul would appoint a time. Still apparently anxious to save the old man, he offered him the chance of addressing the people. Polycarp sternly said that he was bound by his religion to respect the Pro-consul as an authority ordained of God, but as for the people, "I do not count them worthy of defending myself to them."

A herald was sent to announce to the people that Polycarp had confessed himself to be a Christian. Then followed a curious medley of mob violence and a regular execution. The mob demanded that a lion should be let loose on Polycarp. The president of the games (the *Asiarch*) declined on the score that they were over. Then the cry was "Burn him alive." "All this," says the letter, "took less time than it takes us to tell it." The crowd constructed a hasty bonfire, taking the wood from the baths and from workshops. In the meantime Poly-

carp was evidently protected from violence by the officials. When he heard his sentence his face was not troubled, but he appeared so full of joy that the Pro-consul marvelled. He laid aside his robe and tried to take off his shoes, a thing he was unused to because his disciples had always served him so assiduously. He calmly asked to be bound to the stake, not nailed, saying, "He who gives me power to endure the fire will grant me to remain unmoved in the flame." Then bound "as a noble ram out of a great flock, an oblation acceptable and prepared for God," he stood at the stake uttering prayers, praises, and thanksgivings that he was counted worthy to be a sacrifice. When the fire was kindled, the flames would not touch him and a soldier ran in and stabbed him. Out of his side his soul—it was said—came forth in visible form as a dove. The people, fearing that the Christians would worship it, caused his body to be burned, but his disciples reverently collected the charred remains.

It is necessary thus to dwell on the details because the writer of the letter had in his mind the sufferings of Jesus and desired to compare

Polycarp's with his Master's. Thus he was betrayed by faithless servants, he ate his last meal in an upper room, he was brought before a man named Herod, his side was pierced. These analogies may well have been pressed, but hardly so far as to make the whole story artificial. It abounds in little touches which are significant, in personal notices, like the fall from the carriage and the scarred skin, Polycarp's difficulty in taking off his shoes, etc. Further, the words of the saint are in keeping with his character, which is always represented as stern and uncompromising; and his few other recorded utterances are not dissimilar to his saying of the mob, "Away with the atheists." The verdict of common sense is that the narrative is genuine and contemporary. One reason for disputing this is the very unfavourable light in which the Jews are depicted. They are mentioned in the following passages:

XII-2. When the herald had proclaimed this, the entire multitude, both Gentiles and Jews who inhabit Smyrna, cried aloud in uncontrolled anger, "This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the destroyer of our Gods, who teaches many not to sacrifice,

nor worship them." Whoever uttered these words, it certainly was not the Jews.

XIII-1. These things happened with more speed than it takes to relate them, and they made ready wood, taking it from the baths and factories, the Jews, as is their wont, showing most zeal.

XVII-2. They put forward Nicetas, the father of Herod, and the brother of Alce, to ask the governor not to give up the body, "Lest," said he, "they leave the Crucified and worship this man." And this they said at the persistent suggestion of the Jews.

XVIII-1. When the centurion saw the people's resolve, which the Jews had provoked, he put the body in the midst and burned it.

From these passages it has been reasonably inferred that the Jews habitually (as is here averred) encouraged the heathen to persecute the Christians; and some Jews have for this reason declared that the story is fictitious, so far at least as they are concerned, this hostility on their part being, as they maintain, introduced to strengthen the parallel with the Crucifixion. It does not, however, seem at all unnatural that they should have acted as is de-

scribed, nor is the undoubted parallel with the story of the death of Christ sufficient to discredit the entire account. It may be assumed therefore that, at Smyrna at least, the rivalry of Church and Synagogue was very bitter. But the death of Polycarp was evidently due to the desire of the authorities to placate the mob and prevent a serious riot. The Proconsul, Herod, the Justice of the Peace, and Nicetas would gladly have saved Polycarp. From the questions put, it would appear that they would have dismissed him had he shown the slightest compliance. But the people, for some reason, were infuriated against the Christians, and maddened by the scenes they had witnessed, were thirsting for more blood. A mob of this description is always horrible, and evidently the majority were Greeks: if there were Jews there, they only shared in the common guilt.

But this is possibly the only example of the Jews being accused of inciting the heathen to persecute, and there is no conspicuous instance in well-attested early martyrdoms of the Jews coming forward as witnesses against Christians. They are not mentioned in the account

of the Martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, nor in the trial of Justin, nor in the Story of Perpetua and her companions. They do not figure prominently in the great persecutions of the third century. What is more remarkable, the Jews are rarely the persecutors in the *Apocryphal Acts*. The writers of these stories were not hampered by historic facts. When they wanted them, they could draw on the inexhaustible bank of imagination. Now there were Jews in abundance at Rome, but Peter is crucified, according to some versions, because he preaches ascetic chastity and displeases Roman husbands, fathers, and masters. Paul would naturally be expected to be sacrificed to the malignity of Jews, but there is no hint of this in the romantic stories of his death. Andrew had an argument with the High Priest who came to refute him in Greece accompanied by 500 Pharisees. But as by Philip's magic words, all his Jewish enemies were stricken blind and the High Priest suffered the fate of Korah, these can hardly be called persecutors.

Some time has been occupied with the story of Barcochba and the martyrdom of Polycarp,

because they are said to mark much more clearly than they do the severance between the Christians and the Jews. Perhaps it is permissible to suggest that there was no such formal separation. There was an original Christianity fostered, so to speak, under the shadow of the Temple of Jerusalem, led by men of every shade of Judaism from James, the Lord's brother, to Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. But all these leaders were Jews and they lived in a Jewish atmosphere. When they passed away the majority of Christians were Gentiles, not only by race but in thought and feeling. They had never been Jews, and never therefore broke with Judaism. All they retained of the ancient religion was the Old Testament as necessary to prove the Messianic claims of their Lord. Some tried to reject even the Old Testament; but this proved an impossibility, though many neither had nor desired to have any fellowship with the Jews. The descendants of the older Jewish Christianity clung for a time to Israel, but were partly thrust aside or reabsorbed in Jewry. Some joined the newer church, others went

back to their own people. Anyhow they disappeared, discovered here and there as survivals of older conditions. Interesting as sects which recalled the past, they gradually faded into complete oblivion.

Chapter IX

THE CHURCH FATHERS AND JUDAISM

Justin Martyr—Tertullian—Origen

The scene changes from the war-worn fields of Palestine and the blood-stained arena of Smyrna to the quiet walks in Ephesus, in a place known as the Xystus. A philosopher, conspicuous for his garb, is taking his morning walk and is accosted by a man accompanied by some friends with the words "Hail, Philosopher." The philosopher answers with an apt quotation from Homer, "Who may you be, thou best of mortal men?" "Trypho is my name," was the reply. "I am a Hebrew of the circumcision, and I have escaped from the late war and I am living in Greece and chiefly in Corinth." "But why," asked the philosopher, "if you have your law and your prophets do you hope to be helped by philosophy?" "And why should I not? Does not philosophy tell us about God and His Unity and Providence?"

They now walk together, and the Jew says, "Tell us what you think about God, and what your philosophy is."

Then Justin gives an excellent account extant of how he, a philosopher of the Second Century, became a Christian. He says he was perplexed by the numerous schools of philosophies, considering that philosophy is essentially one. His opinion was that the ancient philosophers were truly great, but their followers contented themselves with repeating what their masters had taught; and, instead of being independent investigators of truth, they had become no better than echoes of what they had heard. He resolved, therefore, to attach himself to the different schools for a time in order to ascertain the views of each. His first master was a Stoic; but, when he was told that a knowledge of God was unnecessary, he left him for a Peripatetic, who was so grasping about his fee that Justin sought a Pythagorean. This new master demanded of his pupils a severe preliminary training before he would speak of God, and accordingly, in his impatience to resolve the doubts which perplexed him, Justin placed himself in the hands of a

Platonic philosopher. Here he found more satisfaction and, as Augustine, centuries later, Platonism led him forward with its idealism and the "wings" it seemed to supply for the soul.

The crisis came as he walked by the seashore. An aged man met him, they conversed, and Justin became convinced of the truth of Christianity. "Straightway," to quote his words, "a light was kindled in my soul; and a love of the prophets and of the friends of Christ possessed me; and as I turned his words over in my mind, I found his philosophy alone to be safe and profitable."

This moved Trypho's friends to laughter, but their leader only smiled and courteously complimented Justin on his search for truth. It would, however, be better if he had remained a Platonist. "If you will take my advice," said he, "for I look on you already as a friend, be circumcised, observe the Sabbath laws, and God's feasts and new moons: do all that is written in the law and perchance you may find mercy. But as for the Messiah—even supposing he has been born—he is unknown even to himself, till Elijah comes to

make him manifest. As for you, you are perishing because you have invented a Messiah for yourselves." "Would you let me tell you about Christ?" was virtually Justin's reply. The companions of Trypho began, some to ridicule the philosopher, two went away in disgust, most turned the subject and talked about the late war. Finally the company sat down, and Trypho, who is represented as always courteous and considerate, begins the discussion.

When men discuss a question each remembers best what he himself said; and this is certainly true of Justin. Assuredly the Jews must have made up for their initial rudeness; for they let the philosopher have the major part of the conversation, and every remark of Trypho sets Justin going again. But it is only at the beginning and at the end that Justin is at all prolix. Trypho and his friends continually interrupt with questions in the middle of the dialogue, and here and there the dispute becomes animated.

A full account of the discussion would be tedious; and as analyses are apt to be dull and deceptive, it is best to set forward the princi-

ple objections of Trypho to Justin's theories.

Trypho's first objection is almost modern. "Your precepts in the Gospels, as you call them, are wonderful. I have read them carefully and perceive that they are impossible to keep. But we have definite precepts and a Law and why do you neglect these? How can you expect good from God if you do not do as He tells you?" (Ch. X.)

Justin answers by profuse quotations from Scriptures to show that the old Law is abrogated, and that the prophets testify to Israel's rejection. "What say you," interrupts Trypho, "shall none of us inherit the Holy Mountain?" Justin replies that Scripture says that only those Jews who accept Christ shall do so, and Trypho retorts that it is all very well to quote Scripture, but one must not pick and choose, and avoid those which make for a contrary view; for instance, the prophetic rewards promised to observers of the Sabbath (Ch. XXVII). Passing by several other objections, we come to the crucial one. "It would be well," says Trypho, "if we obeyed our teachers who say we should never discuss religion with you," and he declares it blasphemy to say

that this Crucified Man should be adored as He who spoke to Moses and Aaron out of the cloud (Ch. XXXVIII). Later Trypho concedes that Justin has proved that Messiah must suffer, but this does not prove Jesus to be He.

In discussing the salvation of the Jews, Trypho asks whether those Christians who observe the Law of Moses will be saved. Justin thinks they will; but he admits that many think otherwise. Here we have a proof at an early date (before A.D. 140 certainly) that already Jews and Christians had almost completely parted company (Ch. XLVII).

Trypho now goes to the heart of the matter. He attacks, not the Messiahship of Jesus, but the nature of the Messiah whom the Christians assert to be predicted as a divine Being. "When you say that Messiah existed as God before the ages, and when you say that He submitted to become man, and was born as a man, you utter a foolish paradox." It would be interesting to examine Justin's reply, which is to bring forward an immense mass of Scriptural proof. The whole argument turns on the interpretation of the prophets. Some

might appear fanciful to men of our generation; for no one now could argue mainly from passages, taken from the LXX, and often ingeniously twisted into the sense required by the argument. It is worth noticing that Justin was born in Samaria and Trypho came direct from Palestine, and both used the LXX and ignored the Hebrew altogether.

Trypho naturally accuses Justin of worshipping two gods, God and Messiah. Let him answer without metaphors or wresting the sense of such words as "God of gods," etc. (LV). Justin has recourse to Scripture and gives the usual Christian arguments, that when God said, "Let us make man," when "the Lord rained fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven," when three men appeared to Abraham and suddenly we find God is the speaker, it is a proof that in some mysterious way there are "persons" in the Unity. Messiah was in fact God revealing Himself to man in the old dispensation. It is unnecessary to pursue the arguments. They are not intended for to-day and do not appear convincing to us, yet they are of interest insofar as they introduce us to the mind of a bygone age. The tone of the dis-

cussion is excellent. It is true Trypho at times is provoked and for a moment forgets his wonted courtesy, and that Justin indulges in invectives against the Jews which, considering their recent misfortunes, are scarcely in good taste: yet the disputants part excellent friends. They have discussed the matter for two days; and Justin has had full opportunity for expounding his views to an attentive audience. Whether the dialogue actually took place or this form of argument is adopted as a popular way of conveying the writer's view we cannot know. It is anyhow a work of great merit, nor are the arguments Justin puts into Trypho's mouth frivolous or unworthy. If one may hazard a conjecture the Jew and the Christian are each favourably impressed with the other's mastery of Scripture, and are interested in the difference of interpretation. The *Dialogue* is in a sense unique in patristic literature; as most of the disputes, which form so large a part of the Fathers are with heretics. Here, however, are the arguments on both sides, Jewish as well as Christian, given with commendable fairness.

"We have found," says Trypho, "more than

we expected, and more than we possibly could have expected, and if we could do this more frequently, we should be much helped in searching of the Scriptures themselves. But since you are on the eve of departure, and expect daily to set sail, do not hesitate to remember us as friends when we are gone."

"For my part," says Justin, "if I had remained I would wish to do this daily, but as I am about to set sail I exhort you to give all diligence in this struggle for your own salvation." And so they part. Trypho began by urging Justin to keep the ceremonial law, and Justin ends in a hope that Trypho may believe in Jesus. There is the difference between Judaism and Christianity.

Before leaving the subject, it is worthy of notice that the main argument between Justin and Trypho turns on the question whether the promised Messiah is human or divine. The contention of Trypho is that the Deliverer is a human being who, till He is anointed by Elijah, will not be so much as aware of His mission. With this belief many Jewish Christians taught that Jesus at His Baptism at the hands of the new Elijah, John the Baptist, had

received His commission when the Spirit descended on Him in the Jordan. But the Christians from a very early time considered that the Messiah was foretold as a Divine Being, equivalent to that Wisdom, Who, according to Proverbs VIII, was the assessor of God at the Creation, and also to the Angel of the Lord, who had appeared to the men of old. This came to mean that the presence of Messiah had been constant in the world from the time of the Creation and that all who had pleased God, like Abraham, Moses, and the prophets, were really Christians. The argument, therefore, was on the following lines: The prophets foretold a Divine and not a human Messiah. The Christians confess that Jesus is the Messiah, because God has proved Him to be so, consequently He must be in some sense God. The Jewish answer was, Jesus is not Messiah, because He died an accursed death; and besides this doctrine of a Divine Messiah strikes at the root of Israel's faith that God is One.

Thus from the first the confession that Jesus was Messiah involved all the tremendous consequences of acknowledging His Divinity;

and the Christians were separated from the Jews not merely on ceremonial grounds, but by differences on the great problem of the Unity of God, which the Christians strove to uphold, whilst at the same time they gave to Christ the worship to which God alone has the right. But the point at issue was not so much the Divinity of Jesus, but the Divinity and the pre-existence of the Messiah or Christ. This, however, may be conceded. The belief that Jesus was divine is not entirely a Gentile addition to the original Christianity accepted by the first believers. It is not the whole truth to assert that because the Gentile Christians needed a "Lord" in their cult that they deified Jesus. There was a Jewish side to the honour paid to Him. The defence of His Divinity in the *Dialogue* is wholly Scriptural and depends on the interpretation of the Messianic prophecies. Though Justin, as a philosopher, who in his *Apology* discourses about the *Logos,* as a Christian speaking to Jews, he rests his argument entirely on the Old Testament; in this he is in accord with the unknown writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

We turn from the gentle Justin, with his

liberal view of both Greek philosophy and Judaism, to a man of greater genius, but much less of the true spirit of his religion, Tertullian, the African lawyer, the follower of Irenaeus the Christian champion against all forms of error. But of his voluminous and bitter tractates, only one is directed against the Jews. Tertullian flourished at the end of the second and the beginning of the third century of the Christian era. The enemy to the writers of this age is Gnosticism, whether in its Jewish, Gentile or semi-Christian form, its speculations about celestial hierarchies, its severance of the Supreme Being from this world of matter, its division of mankind into enlightened and ignorant, and its alleged secret tradition as to the true meaning of the Christian revelation. Judaism no longer seriously troubles Irenaeus, Tertullian and Hippolytus; and this means that the severance between it and Christianity was almost complete.

However, Tertullian has one treatise, *Adversus Judaeos*. The genuineness and integrity of this document are not admitted by all; but for our present purpose the question is not of particular importance. In the first part

the abrogation of the old Law is insisted upon, but in a different fashion to that adopted by earlier writers. Tertullian is a Roman lawyer, and the trend of his mind everywhere appears. Indeed his Christianity, earnest as he always is, and at times capable of rising to real heights, is essentially legalistic. In common with the lawyers of his time, Tertullian draws a distinction between the natural law common to all men and fundamental and unchangeable, and statute law which can be altered to suit the convenience of time and place. The law which Abraham and his predecessors observed was the unalterable law of nature, the precepts such as circumcision which he received and were developed in the Mosaic legislation were by their nature transitory. Thus Tertullian deals with the Sabbath, Circumcision, sacrifice, etc.

More interesting is the method of explaining Scriptures in the more doubtful part of the treatise. Tertullian thus deals with the prophecy of Emmanuel. It must be quoted in Tertullian's own words because he bases his argument upon a version which we cannot accept as representing the original Hebrew.

"Hear ye, house of David; no petty contest have ye with men, since God is proposing a struggle. Therefore God himself will give you a sign; behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and ye shall call His name Emmanuel: butter and honey shall He eat since He, before the child learn to call 'father' or 'mother,' He shall receive the power of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria in opposition to the King of Assyria."

The Jews say, "Your Christ never bore this name, nor did He come as a warrior." The answer is, all must be interpreted figuratively. An infant cannot be a conquering warrior who receives the spoil of Damascus and Samaria. The child, it is said, will do this before he knows his father and his mother. The prophecy was fulfilled when the wise men from the East offered the infant Jesus gold, frankincense and myrrh.

As for the Virgin birth, Isaiah cannot mean that a "young woman" will bear a child. This birth is a *sign* and therefore must be miraculous, i.e., contrary to experience and nature. There is here a possible hint that the Jews had

tried to get rid of the words "the Virgin" in the Greek Bible.

This brings us to the alleged tampering with those texts of Scripture to which the Christians attached a Messianic significance. All the arguments to which reference has been made were based on the version of the Seventy, and a specimen of how greatly this differs from the Massoretic text is already before us. But anyhow the Septuagint was the Bible of the Christians, and how far the Hellenistic Jews understood Hebrew in a scholarly fashion is not determined. Perhaps a man like Trypho, who says he studied with the philosophers of Corinth, knew only Greek, though he had gone to fight for his country in Palestine. Anyhow no Gentile Christian seems to have known Hebrew in the Second Century. However, in the Third there was in Origen an Alexandrian Christian philosopher, a man sufficiently anxious to get at the true sense of Scripture, to study Hebrew and to undertake the gigantic task of ascertaining how the text of the LXX was in accord with the original.

Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible

were numerous and four were conspicuous: the old LXX, made in the days of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and those of Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus. The act of translating one language into another is one of the most difficult; and perfection is well-nigh unattainable. There are in our own language many words absolutely untranslateable into that of peoples living in close contact with us, under conditions very similar to our own. The task, therefore of giving a satisfactory rendering of an ancient language, which is Semitic in its genius, into one of the most copious and inflected tongues the human race has ever employed is formidable indeed. Greek can never, as the writer to the *Preface* of the Wisdom of Ben-sira (Ecclesiasticus) recognised, adequately render Hebrew, and yet the Old Testament was only expounded in the Church by the version of the Seventy or Septuagint, parts of which are tolerably faithful, but in many places it is difficult to understand what the Hebrew before the translator could have been. As the Christians drew their arguments from this version, the Jews made other translations, the favourite being that of Aquila, who

is said to have been the superintendent of the works for restoring Jerusalem as a heathen city in the days of Hadrian. He has also been identified, probably because of a fancied similarity of his name, with Onkelos, the author of the Targun. The characteristic of the version of Aquila is its extreme literalness. Word for word he follows the Hebrew with complete disregard to the sense. The chief Christian charge against him is that he rendered the word *"almah"* not by "virgin" but by "young woman" in Is. VII: 14.

Origen published a Bible with the various versions in parallel columns: (1) the original Hebrew, (2) the same transliterated, (3) Aquila, (4) Symmachus, (5) the LXX, (6) Theodotion. This is the so-called Hexapla, and it is of interest to us as being the one serious attempt on the part of a Greek writer to understand the Hebrew of the Old Testament. As Judaism and Christianity had completely parted company by the middle of the third century, it now remains to sum up the results of our previous enquiry into the progress of this separation.

By about A.D. 250 the Christian Church

was so thoroughly organised that three severe persecutions by Decius, Valerian, and the Diocletian Emperors, could not break its power as a corporate society. Christianity was not an opinion nor a sentiment but a highly disciplined community able to dictate both the terms of admission and the conditions of remaining within its circle. These depended on the conduct and the creed of the members of the Church, increasing emphasis being laid on correct belief. With church and creed clearly defined Christianity became impervious to those influences which had previously reacted upon it; and we hear less of tendencies towards the Gnosis or Judaism. Controversy as to what the original teaching of the Church was was disappearing; the question now being what the Church had decided must be believed.

The severe disasters of the Jewish nation had also driven it into isolation: its Hellenising days were over, it ceased to produce its literature in Greek, and employed Hebrew and Aramaic. The Rabbinical Schools became as dogmatic in regard to conduct as those of the Church were as to creed. The two virtually ceased from disputing with one another and

the lull of controversy was the sign of complete separation. For many centuries the Christian teachers remained ignorant of Hebrew with the exception of a few prodigies of learning like St. Jerome in the fourth century and Roger Bacon and Robert Grosseteste in the thirteenth. Possibly there were also exceptions among the learned monks of Ireland in the interval.

This was an immense loss to the Christian Church, which based much of its dogmatic teaching on mistranslations of the Old Testament. With all their intellectual acuteness the theologians often built on the sand because they could not consult the Hebrew Bible. Post-Reformation theological learning is distinguished from that of the pre-Reformation divines by the fact that the knowledge of Hebrew had become indispensable to scholars. The publication of the Complutensian Polyglot by the famous Spanish Cardinal Ximenes marks the beginning of a new era. The Jew was once more called in to instruct the Christian.

When Trypho began his discussion with Justin, he invited him to become a Jew, to

accept circumcision, and to conform to the practices of the Law. When Justin in turn bade farewell to Trypho he hoped that in time he would believe in Christ.

Herein lies the distinction which caused the split of the Synagogue and the Church. From the first, as has been shown, the Jews felt that the Christians were indifferent to the Law. Jesus, it is alleged, violated the law of the Sabbath, Peter went into men uncircumcised and did eat with them, Paul was accused of teaching apostasy from the law of Moses and that men should not circumcise their children nor walk according to the customs. The Jew thought he could best serve God by keeping the commands he found in the written law which his nation had received from God. There they were and the least he could do was to obey them to the letter. Nor was this mere externalism. God could surely best be served and man's love to Him best shown by living, keeping the rules which God was believed to have commanded. Yet there was always the danger of religion becoming no more than the perfunctory performance of ceremonial rites.

The Christian, on the other hand, laid great stress on the importance of right belief. Whether consciously or not he made Jesus his God. The process by which he arrived at this belief, if he were a Jew, was strictly logical—Jesus was the Christ. If so, how was He so? He was not a warrior Messiah delivering Israel as the prophets seemed to teach—He had not literally fulfilled any prediction of this character. Humanly speaking, He had completely failed; and from man's standpoint He was not the Messiah. But suppose the prophets had foretold a Divine Sufferer whose lowly appearance, failure and death only enhanced His condescension. Suppose God had been from the very first manifesting Himself in human form, then the Messiah was actually the appearance of God on earth, and Jesus as Messiah could receive the worship which is His due. If this be so the most important thing is the recognition of Jesus in His true dignity, and the acceptance of Him as the Saviour. In other words, faith is the first requisite. Here the danger lies in regarding right belief as the essence of true religion.

Both Justin and Trypho refuse the proposal

made to them. Justin will not submit to the ordinances of the Law, nor will Trypho accept the creed of the Gospel. So they part and each goes his own way.

But they act as they do on the same principle. Each is convinced that he is under the direction of an infallible guide. To Trypho the Law is a revelation of God's will and he must act as it directs: Justin has a revelation of the nature of God through Jesus Christ and he must believe. Such was the situation when Jew and Gentile parted, and such has it been for long ages. Has a great change come over us when these alternatives will be no longer inevitable?

Many young people, both Jewish and Christian, find the same difficulty in different forms. Some give up all pretence of practising their religion. They see no good in it, and they just drift away without troubling to ask even themselves why they should do so. The more thoughtful ones inquire seriously whether their ancestral faith ought to be retained, and many decide in the negative. "Why," says the young Jew, "should I observe a number of customs, which I am told are only survivals of bar-

barism?" His religious friends reply, "Because the Law commands it." And his retort is, "How do I know that this Law is divine: and if it is not why should I observe it?"

How is it with the rising generation of Christians? They are told that their salvation depends on certain theological propositions from which their intellects recoil, or they are unwilling to accept, because they have no meaning whatever to them, and no practical bearing on their lives. "But," say some of their teachers, "you must believe it because it has Divine authority." They make virtually the same reply as their Jewish brothers.

Yet on one point Jewish and Christian men and women, who are anxious for the world's welfare, are in full agreement. "We can have no hope for the future of an entirely godless world. The restraining hand of religion is more needed now than ever." Thus whether Jew or Christian we have to face the question, "What is religion?" Is it the observance of a number of rules and regulations, food laws, sanitary laws, some undoubtedly beneficial, others apparently unreasonable? But whatever may be said for or against these, Are they

an essential part of that which unites men to God? Ought we to foster selfish isolation from our fellow men in the pretext that we are doing God's Will? It must be remembered that Christians are liable to fall into this delusion; not the Jews only. Or is religion a matter of faith, as once defined by a child, "Believing what I know cannot possibly be true"? Does orthodoxy, or thinking exactly as authority tells us we ought to think, bring us nearer God? The Jew says "Obey," the Christian "Believe," and both are right: and if they mean what they ought to mean, they say the same thing; for to obey God one must believe in Him, and to believe in Him is to be obedient to all that He stands for, namely, truth, purity, mercy, and love to mankind. Jesus Christ to Christians who are His professed followers must represent all these things, and so far as can be known about Him, He set forth the highest ideal of what God desires man to be; and it would be well indeed if Christians would try more to follow in His steps than to define what should be believed concerning the mystery of His nature.

The object here is to explain a strange phe-

nomenon in history, and to express a hope that Jew and Christian after their age-long separation may once more unite in the noblest of all efforts, that of bringing man to love and obey God and so to hasten the coming of the Kingdom of God upon earth, which cannot be done if they remain apart in hostile camps, contemptuously disregarding the efforts of the best members of either communion to bring about at least a mutual understanding.

INDEX

Acts of the Apostles, 62
Africanus, chronographer, 139
Agrippa I, Herod, 66, 129
Agrippa II, Herod, 110, 129
Akiba, Rabbi, 179, 185
Alexandria, Jews attack Gentiles, 181
Aliturus, 129
Amos, a moral teacher, 40
Ananus, High Priest, 139
Andreas, or Lucuas, Jewish leader, 182
Anicetus, bishop of Rome, 193
Antiquities, by Josephus, 117
Apion, Josephus against, 118
Apocalyptic literature, 16
Apocryphal Acts, 200
Apostles, the Twelve, 134
Apostolic Council, 77
Aquila, Greek bible of, 218
Aristo of Pella, 181
Augustine view of Paul, 85
Antioch in Syria, Church at, 73

Bacon, Roger, 221
Baptism of Jesus, 31
Baptism, 33, 34
Barnabas, 80
Barnabas, Epistle of, 170
Barcochba, 178
Bithara fortress, 183
Byrennius, 173

Caligula (Caius), 128
Cephas Paul calls Peter, 148
Christ and Jesus in Epistle to Hebrews, 162
Christianity a new religion, 90
Chrysostom, St. John praises Paul, 89, 90
Citizenship, Roman, 127
Clementine romance, 146
Complutensian, Polyglot, 221
Corinthians I, Epistle to, 95
Cornelius, conversion of, 72
Cyprus, revolt of Jews in, 182

Disraeli, Benjamin, 122
Dion Cassius, 180, 189
Domitian, 116, 140

Ebionites, sect of, 141
Emmanuel, 216
Empire, meaning of word, 123
Ephesus, 203
Epiphanius, 185
Essenes, sect of, 141
Eucharist, prayer in, 173
Eusebius, historian, 139

Fanaticism, danger of, 92
Fasting, Jesus and, 54
Food laws, 96

Galatians, Epistle to, 147
Gamaliel, 64, 87
Gentile converts, 72, 75, 99
Gospels, studied by Jews, 60
Great Announcement attributed to Simon Magus, 71
Grosseteste, bishop, 221

Hadrian, war under, 16, 18, 183, 187
Hebrews, Epistle to, 158
Hegesippus, historian, 139
Hellenists, 65
Herod the Great, 129
Herod a justice of the peace at Smyrna, 194
Herod the tetrarch, 27
Herodotus, 121

Hippolytus, Christian father, 71
Human sacrifice, charge of, 119

Ignatius, letters of, 174
Imperium and *Imperator*, 123
Interim ethik, 47

James, Epistle of, 141
James, Lord's brother, 67, 135, 138
Jerome, St., on Barcochba, 185, 186
Jerusalem, council of, 77, 80
Jerusalem called Ælia, 179
Jesus, son of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), 16, 218
Jesus, teaching of, 39, 41
  an historical person, 41, 43
  observes law, 75
  resurrection of, 44
Jesus, the cross of, 103
Jewish Christians, 201
Jews' ignorance about allies of Rome, 120, 128
  martyrdom of Polycarp, 197
John the Baptist, 23 ff., 27, 35
John, Gospel according to, 152
John, St., 135, 151, 152
Josephus, 15, 22, 27, 112, 132
Jotapata, siege of, 114
Judas of Galilee, 22
Justin, martyr, 185, 191, 203
Justus of Tiberias, 117
Juvenal, on Sabbath, 52

Law, Jews delight in, 17, 19
Life of Josephus, 117
Luke, companion of Paul, 86
Luke, Gospel according to, 23 ff.
Luther, view of Paul, 85

Maccabees, books of, 16
Maimonides, 186
Marcion view of Paul, 85
Messiah, 22, 162, 209
Mishna, Jewish, 22
Modernism, Jewish and Christian, 224
Mohammedanism, 105
Mond-Cecil papyri, 120
Münter, 186

Paul, St., 35, 89
Peter and Paul, SS., feast of, 149
Peter, St., 62
Peter, St., called "the Rock," 135, 146, 151
Petronius, governor of Syria, 128
Pharisees, 21, 36, 49, 50, 152
Philemon, letter to, 97
Philippians, Epistle to, 86
Philo, 16, 69, 141, 164
Polycarp, martyr, 192
Priests, Jewish, obedient to the Faith, 65
Priesthood, Jewish, 49
Prophecy, cessation of, 23
Provinces, Roman, 125
Proselytes, baptism of, 34
  fanaticism of, 69

Quintus, or Quietus, sent against Jews, 181

Repentance, need of, 33
Roman and English compared, 125

Sabbath, Jesus on, 51
  in Roman Law, 93
Sacraments and Paul, 86, 107
Samaritans, 70
Septuagint, bible of Christians, 217
Sermon on the Mount, 45
Severus, Hadrian's general, 184
Sick, care of Jesus for, 57
Simon Magus, 70
Solomon, *Wisdom* of, 16
Smyrna, martyrdoms at, 192

Spartianus, *Life of Hadrian*, 180, 184
Stephen, St., 65
Symeon, bishop of Jerusalem, 140
Symmachus, bible of, 219
Synagogue and Church part company, 223

Tabernacle, worship of, 161
Tacitus, 121
Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, 173
Tertullian, 214
Theodotian, bible of, 219
Therapeutæ, 141
Titus, 115
Tradition, 55
Trajan revolt of Jews, 181
Trypho, 203
Tübingen, school of, 106

Vespasian, 115, 190
Virgin birth of Jesus, 216

Wars, by Josephus, 114
Ways, the Two, 173
Whiston, W., on Josephus, 110

Zacharias, father of the Baptist, 23
Zadokite document, 18